THE

MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

No. 1. APRIL, 1938. Vol. XXVIII.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Lord Hugh Cecil and English Modernism.

The *Church Times* of April 1 publishes an interesting interview with Lord Hugh Cecil. Lord Hugh's unfeigned piety, fearless integrity, loyalty to the principles and practice of the Church of England, and not least his insistence upon the rights of the laity in the government of that Church, secure for him the respect of Churchmen of every type. Lord Hugh feels, as keenly as does the Primate and many less exalted Churchmen, the need of 'a well thought out effort to re-convert the nation.' Whilst convinced that Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals could not only co-operate but have much to contribute to such an undertaking, he 'does not believe useful co-operation with Modernists possible.' His interviewer reports him as saying :

> 'I respect the Modernist's sincerity, and often his learning. But there is no evangelizing power in his negations.'

We wish that we could convince Lord Hugh, and perhaps the many who share his views, that the Modernist's main concern is not with 'negations.' It is true that the Modernist teacher is compelled at times to utter negations, but for him *omnis negatio est affirmatio*, he denys only that he may affirm. He clears the

field of error in order that he may present the truth with more convincing power. As the Modernist sees it — and this has a most important bearing upon the effectiveness of any national recall to religion — the essential truths of Christianity are again and again rendered objectionable and incredible to multitudes of educated, and even uneducated Englishmen, by those truths being united and intertwined with grotesque superstitions. If cogency is to be secured, examples must be given.

There are many Englishmen who cannot accept the doctrine of the Divine Incarnation in Jesus Christ because it is made dependent upon belief in the Virgin Birth. There are many who do not believe in the Atonement because it is united to a doctrine of expiatory sacrifice which belongs to the 'blood-theology' and 'angry God' conceptions of an outworn Evangelicalism. Even the hope of immortality has been discredited, for not a few, by the crudities connected with the resurrection of the flesh and the dramatic horrors of the Great Assize. The coming of the Divine Kingdom on earth, if taught as dependent upon the Church's response to Divine Grace, might be credible to many if the irruption of archangels with flaming swords from the celestial regions — as the supreme and final method of Deity to bring in that Kingdom — could be relegated to the region of phantasy. Above all the Bible might once again become the moral and spiritual classic of the English people if the absurdities of fundamentalism could be entirely separated from the study and understanding of the sacred volume.

Lord Hugh seems to fail to recognize that it is not only the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, which are keeping many of his countrymen from professing the Christian religion, but the vast accumulations of superstition connected with that religion, which are repelling them. It is because the Modernist has stood, amidst much opposition and still greater misunderstanding, for courageous, intelligent, and humble-minded, doctrinal reform as an absolute necessity for once again securing the sway of the Christian religion over the private and public life of England, that the conservative forces of the Church (traditionalist, fundamentalist, obscurantist) have opposed him — but we believe largely in vain.

Fr. Woodlock has asserted on many occasions that 'the Church of England is honeycombed with Modernism.' Of course the phrase of this eminent Jesuit controversialist is intended to rouse apprehensions in the minds of conservative English Churchmen of the Catholic type and so lead them to forsake the Church of their fathers before they are buried in its ruins. But it surprises us that an educated Englishman of Lord Hugh Cecil's quality can take his stand on that side. We do not deny that foolish things have been said by Modernists: that at times the destructive side of Biblical criticism has been overstressed. Every cause, however good, has much to fear from its rash and foolish friends. But when the quality of the contribution, made by leading English Modernists to the truer understanding of Christianity, is critically examined and justly assessed, it cannot but be evident that English Modernism has an immense part to play in the recall of the nation to the Christian religion. Moreover, Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals can only become effective in the part they play in that great mission in so far as they allow their own proper presentation of Christian truth and spiritual experience to be purged by the spirit of Modernist conviction which holds that Christian tradition needs in every age to be re-examined and re-presented in the light of an ever-increasing knowledge of the truth.

The Genius of the English Church.

It is very hard for Unitarians to feel sympathetically towards the Church of England. They themselves have stood so uncompromisingly for Christian truth as they see it, and have suffered so much on that account in the way of religious and social ostracism to feel any real sympathy or respect for a Church which seems to them to be based on compromise, and to direct its policy in a spirit of opportunism. Yet of all that has been published in the religious press concerning the recent Doctrinal Report, we have not come across anything which shews more real understanding of the Church of England — its constitution, difficulties, policy and task—than an article contributed to the *Inquirer* of February 5th by the Rev. Lawrence Redfern, the distinguished Unitarian, against whose admission to the pul-

pit of Liverpool Cathedral such indignant protest was expressed by so many Churchmen of the narrower kind. Mr. Redfern's article begins as follows :

> Those who have read intelligently and sympathetically the Report of the Commission on Christian Doctrine, must be more vividly conscious than ever of the amazing diversity of opinion inside the Anglican Church. It is a remarkable institution, worthy of the title 'National Church,' if only for the reason that it is characteristically English, the creation of a temper of mind and habit of thought, which lie at the root of many successes in our rough island story. During the past few days we have met devoted sons of the Church whose loyalty to the Anglican Communion is unquestioned, some of whom rejoice wholeheartedly in the clear and temperate statement of doctrine which the Report gives: others talk of forts yielded and territory surrendered: others would re-echo the dry comment of the Duke of Wellington when he read the constitution of the Holy Alliance — 'the British Government would prefer something a little more precise.'
>
> But it may be doubted whether British Governments — especially of the ecclesiastical order — have ever cherished a strong desire for a nice precision in matters of dogma and belief. Through the long history of the Anglican Church there has run an undefined spirit of compromise between the Catholic and Protestant elements in traditional Christianity, and this odd mixture of logically incompatible elements, has produced for the most part a perpetual condition of unstable equilibrium. It is not surprising that in an institution so derived and so maintained, there should be wide diversity of view and practice, a large range and measure of vagueness and indefiniteness, an unwillingness to face critical questions, a hesitation in taking disciplinary measures against those who call the generally accepted doctrines in question. Indeed, the immediate occasion of the appointment of the doctrinal commission was a paper on the Incarnation read by Dr. Rashdall at the Summer School of the Modern Churchmen's Union held in Cambridge in 1921. The protests to Convocation which that paper evoked led the two Primates to seek, by this means, to avoid the necessity of pursuing a course which would have imperilled the unity of the Church.

Mr. Redfern concludes his able and open-minded article with the following paragraphs :

> So we welcome this Report. It is a sign of the times. We pay respectful tribute to its unbroken Christian temper, its freedom from judgment and condemnation and exclusion. It reveals great differences of opinion between the dogmatic notion of truth and the scientific: between intellectual liberty and ecclesiastical authority: between externality and inwardness: between the new and the old. It reveals too a deep uneasiness of soul and at the same time a growing conviction that loyalty to truth at all costs is a great loyalty, and can only be maintained by a spirit that would be rightly faithful and rightly free.
>
> Will the Anglican Church remain where it now stands, offering an embarrassing choice of doctrines to its adherents? Will this Report be the sealing of a final pact between Reason and Belief? We do not

think so. The former Dean of St. Paul's, who has enjoyed an undeserved reputation for pessimism, is radiantly optimistic about the Report. 'The Modern Churchmen's Union,' he declares, 'has very little left to fight about. Our occupation is gone.' Certain it is that the demand for intellectual liberty is coming in like the tide. And this Report — to use Dr. Inge's figure of speech — 'marks the position of King Canute's chair in the present year of grace.'

Pseudo-Science in Defence of Biblical Fundamentalism.

The following letter published in the *Birmingham Post* of March 7th deserves attention, not on account of what it asserts, but because of the crushing refutation it has evoked.

Sir,

We, the undersigned, representing the Members and Associates of the Victoria Institute or Philosophical Society of Great Britain, and of the Evolution Protest Movement, are instructed by our respective Councils to ask the favour of a little space in your pages to make an emphatic protest against one statement in the recently-issued report of the Commission on Christian Doctrine appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in 1922.

We have no desire to revive the discussion on this report as a whole; but there is one assertion in it which, if passed by us without contradiction, might be taken by our supporters to imply agreement with it. That statement, on page 45 of the report, is that 'No objection to a theory of evolution can be drawn from the two Creation narratives in Genesis I and II, since it is generally agreed among educated Christians that these are mythological in origin and their value for us is symbolic rather than historical.'

This sweeping and questionable assertion as to the opinions of educated Christians, if not disputed, is bound to have far-reaching and misleading influences on the minds of the general public. Since the doctrines of Christianity are based on the truth of the inspired Scriptures and are all inter-connected, the assertion that any one is in origin mythological must engender doubt on others whether they also are mythological or historical. Moreover, the statement ignores the fact that no evolution theory has been universally accepted as valid. To the Darwinian theory serious objections have been raised even by some naturalists asserting faith in evolution. Alfred Russel Wallace, ardent Darwinian though he was, says in the last sentence of his book, 'Darwinism,' that, though natural selection may account for man's body, his intellectual and moral faculties must have had their origin in an unseen universe of Spirit. Again, Professor J. Graham Kerr says in his book 'Evolution' that palaeontological knowledge regarding man's past is still of the most fragmentary kind — and the serious student of evolution has to step very warily when he enters it. Mr. H. F. Osborn, formerly head of the Natural History Museum of New York, said in 1926: 'Were Darwin alive to-day he would be the first to modify the speculations and conclusions of 1859.' Also he declared the Ape-Man is a myth.

Detailed disagreement with the Darwinian theory has been given by such eminent naturalists as Berg, Vialleton, Fleischmann, Sir W.

Dawson, Dr. Bell Dawson, W. Bateson and many others. No other theories, such as those of Lamarck or de Vries, have received such wide acceptance as that of Darwin; and it is frankly admitted by many evolutionists that the origin of species is still an unfathomed mystery. Hence to say that no objection to a theory of evolution can be drawn from the Creation narratives of the Bible is to assume that we may substitute the dubious inferences of the human mind for the revealed certainties of Divine Creation even though examples of such creation are given to us in the unrefuted miracles of Christ.

The noble appeal of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the nation in 1936 for a wide return to Christian faith and worship is nullified to a large extent by the sedulous propagation of an unconfirmed theory of human origin which leads many to conclude that the teachings and miracles in the Bible are largely 'mythological in origin,' and that man is merely a superior animal, one with the animals in origin, in struggle for existence and in final fate.

T. C. Skinner, Honorary Secretary,
Ambrose Fleming, President,
The Victoria Institute or Philosophical Society of Great Britain.

Charles Marston, Vice-President,
Bernard Acworth, Vice-Chairman of Council,
The Evolution Protest Movement.

The Bishop of Birmingham's reply in the *Birmingham Post* next day, which we have much pleasure in reprinting, deserves the thanks of all lovers of truth.

Sir,

The letter published in your columns to-day which attempts, in the supposed interest of the Christian faith, to cast doubt on the fact of man's animal origin will do harm. I regret that Sir Ambrose Fleming has signed it. He is a physicist of distinction now approaching his ninetieth year, and he lends his name to sentences so phrased as to lead the casual reader to conclude that competent specialists repudiate the doctrine of evolution; whereas, in fact, they merely differ as to the mechanism by which man evolved from lower mammals.

For instance, Bateson is only mentioned in the sentence: 'Detailed disagreement with the Darwinian theory has been given by such eminent naturalists as . . . Sir W. Dawson, Dr. Bell Dawson, W. Bateson and many others.' Now, Sir John William Dawson was a Canadian geologist who was born as long ago as 1820. He, with the pathetic obscurantism of his old age, was capable of writing a book: 'Eden Lost and Won: Studies of the Early History and Final Destiny of Man as Taught in Nature and Revelation.' Bateson was born more than forty years later and remained brilliant until his too early death. He had no belief whatever in the literal truth of the Creation narratives of Genesis. In fact, in the volume in honour of Darwin published by the Cambridge Press in 1910, Bateson wrote (p. 99): 'With faith

in evolution unshaken—if, indeed, the word faith can be used in application to that which is certain—we look on the manner and causation of adapted differentiation as still wholly mysterious.' May I be permitted to wonder as to the credentials of the 'eminent naturalist,' Dr. Bell Dawson, with whom Bateson is classed? If alive, he is not a Fellow of the Royal Society: if dead, his name does not appear in the 'Dictionary of National Biography.'

The letter to which I take exception refers to Graham Kerr's book, 'Evolution': but merely states that in it the Professor says that 'palaeontological knowledge regarding man's past is still of the most fragmentary kind—and the serious student of evolution has to step very warily when he enters it.' Would any reader believe from this statement that, in summing up his conclusions (p. 272), Graham Kerr wrote in this book: 'As to the method by which variation is controlled and guided along definite paths so as to bring about evolutionary progress, I regard the Darwinian hypothesis of natural selection, with certain modifications in detail, as still holding the field.'

There is in the letter, which might well have been written from Tennessee, a reference to the American biologist, H. F. Osborn: 'He declared the ape-man is a myth,' and asserted that 'were Darwin alive to-day he would be the first to modify the speculations and conclusions of 1859.' But the authors of the letter do not state that Osborn's fame rests on his investigation of parallel lines of evolution among different types of mammals: they are silent as to the fact that he received the Darwin medal of the Royal Society in 1918.

Such tortuous use of authorities as I have instanced is much to be regretted. The fact of man's evolution from lower mammals and theirs in turn from primitive forms of life is now universally accepted by competent biologists. To deny an accepted scientific truth in the fancied defence of the Bible or of the Christian faith must inevitably diminish regard for the Bible and bring discredit on Christianity. When the arguments supporting such denial are not quite candid, the harm done by misguided enthusiasts may be far-reaching.

E. W. Birmingham.

That brilliant dialectician Dr. Henson once described his opponents in the Protestant underworld as an army of illiterates led by nonagenarians. Such a designation would not be a correct description of the membership of the Societies which have produced this Fundamentalist protest. The members of these Societies are not illiterate but they represent a type of Christian apologetic which is hopelessly out-of-date and is as ineffective as it is detrimental. There is both truth and falsehood in their complaint:

> 'Since the doctrines of Christianity are based on the truth of the inspired Scriptures and are all inter-connected, the assertion that any one is in origin mythological must engender doubt on others whether they also are mythological or historical.'

For modern Biblical students the precise amount of mythology in the Biblical narrative can only be decided as the result of rigorous and detailed research in every case. The saying that 'Deception lies hid in generalities,' is nowhere truer than in the sphere of Biblical studies.

When, in the name of science, they stress what they regard as the weakness of the palaeontological proof of evolution they seem to forget, or perhaps choose to ignore, that the proof of evolution is fivefold as T. H. Huxley demonstrated half a century ago, and the palaeontological proof is only one of the five.

Is Intercommunion Right or Wrong?

In our February issue (p. 591) we made reference to two important documents recently published by the S.C.M. drawn up by the joint committees of Anglicans and Free Churchmen engaged in Conference for some years past. The first of these is *The Practice of Intercommunion and the Doctrine of the Church.*[1]

It deals with the theological thought which lies behind the sacramental practices and sacramental divisions of the various Reformed Churches. The Free Churches invite all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity to come together to the Lord's Table. For them the Holy Communion is the symbolic act by sharing in which Christians manifest the love which they 'ought to have among themselves one to another.'[2] Partaking together of the Holy Communion is essentially an idealistic and prophetic action reminding Christians of what they ought to be in their relations one to another through Christ, rather than a demonstration of the actual situation existing in their Church life.

The stiff Anglican view—held we believe by only a very small, though very influential, section in the English Church—differs acutely from the foregoing view, since it regards partaking together of the Holy Communion as a culminating act demonstrating what is the actual realized relationship between all those who share together in the Eucharistic rite. Being thus the Sacrament of the realized Christian unity of all who share in

[1] S.C.M. Press. 2d. 1938. [2] Article xxviii.

it, it seems to the stiff Anglican both inconsistent and insincere that those who are in ecclesiastical schism — that is are adherents of sectarian denominations — should be allowed to partake together in a united Eucharistic celebration.

All Modernists will feel that the idealist and prophetic view of the Eucharist is essentially true to the great principles of Christian hope and faith and love; as well as to the spirit, and until recent times the practice, of the Church of England. The essence of the Christian Gospel is that it redeems men by helping them to realize what they are potentially, rather than what they are actually, and by treating them as such. The rigid view of the Eucharist is as lacking in the essentially Christian spirit as it is impotent in the face of the existing situation in the Christian world to-day. Our document asserts, in a spirit of benign charity, that the adherents of both views 'desire only to be loyal and true to the same Lord Jesus Christ.' This may be readily granted. Nevertheless the more profound and searching question must also be answered: Are they both equally loyal and true to the same Lord Jesus Christ? Can we really have any doubt as to our Lord's welcome in the Eucharist to all who love Him in sincerity?

This document, true to its purpose, concludes thus:

> 'These reflections are put forward as a contribution to mutual understanding. The aim is twofold: (1) to show how Free Churchmen may be justified in supporting that policy without any abandonment of their essential convictions; (2) to show how Anglicans may be justified in abstention from Inter-communion without any lack of charity or of appreciation of the spiritual values preserved in traditions other than their own. The document is now published with a view to a fuller understanding and closer fellowship in Christ among the inheritors of these divergent traditions.'

Although obviously a document not of finality, but of transition, we welcome it heartily as possessing the highest significance.

A Practical Scheme of Reunion.

The second of these two documents, entitled *Outline of a Reunion Scheme for the Church of England and the Evangelical Free Churches of England*,[1] puts forward a most interest-

[1] S.C.M. Press. 6d. 1938.

ing practical scheme for the realization of corporate union by the Church of England and the Free Churches. The ideal of the scheme is clearly expressed in the following extract from it.

> 'Our ideal of reunion is one of unity with variety. It does not mean absorption by any existing body, nor would it involve a flat and meagre uniformity; rather it would conserve, and make more widely available, the spiritual treasures at present cherished in separation. The spiritual vitality of each section suffers through isolation in organisation from the rest. While the value of the present varieties of emphasis in Christian faith and experience must be preserved, these very varieties should be varieties within the life of the Body' (p. 9).

Although the writers of the document require as conditions of Church membership the reception of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, yet it is most gratifying to observe that they are not satisfied as to the finality of this condition and state this most significantly in the following footnote (p. 10):

> 'No one who believes that Jesus Christ commanded His disciples to baptise or that His first disciples from the very beginning did so, could consent to any other rule of membership in His Church, but when the Church in unity has that wisdom which it lacks in its divisions, it will have to consider what fellowship it can give to devoted followers of Christ like the Friends who do not use sacraments, supposing that they on their part desire fellowship with the Church which provides sacraments, and with its members who use them.'

Whilst stressing as a necessity for the United Church adhesion to the traditional Christian faith set forth in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, and the use of the same, the writers of the document do 'not exclude reasonable liberty of interpretation' of the creeds, and what is most important, they recognize the ever-present and developing unveiling of Divine Truth given to faithful Christians by the teaching of the Holy Spirit in each successive age of the Church's history.

The reunion scheme outlined demands no re-ordination of Christian ministers, but provides for episcopal ordination for all new members of the Ministry in the future. Moreover it demands no particular theory of the nature of ordination but only the practical recognition of its obligations by those ordained.

There are in the New Testament two outstanding characteristics of the Christian Ministry. (1) That it is a ministry of *service*, not of lordship. 'He that would be greatest among you let him be the servant of all.' It would be well in the interests

of Christian re-union that all idea of authority should, if possible, be separated from the office of the ministry. The mark of the greatest, as of the least, in that ministry is that he is both in his practice and in his spirit *servus servorum Dei*—the servant of the servants of God. (2) That this ministry is *representative*. No Christian minister possesses theoretically any spiritual grace which is not the possession of the Christian community, as a whole, and potentially, of every member of it. Dr. William Temple said on one occasion that: 'The bishops are the organs of the Holy Ghost or they are nothing.' This is of course true of all bishops, but it is equally true of the humblest member of the Christian Church. It is only because the Church itself is the *organon* of the Spirit, and each member of the Church is by virtue of his membership a Christian priest that the representative ministry of the Church can claim these spiritual and priestly possessions.

Until the right conception of the Ministry in relation to the Church is recovered there is no hope of securing Christian reunion on a sound basis. And we are compelled to add that the conception of the ministry as held in many of the Free Churches is closer to the essential Christian truth of its nature than that held by many English Churchmen. Where the Free Churchmen are weak is not in their conception, for the most part, of the Christian ministry, but in their conception of the Christian Church. What they have been seeking too often, in the name of Christian Fellowship, is not Christian unity but simply recognition of the validity of their own particular ministries. The organic unity of the Church they have cared nothing about, and know nothing of. This is not because they are sectarian in spirit, but because they are denominationalist in practice. On the other hand, the English Churchman, although entirely right in his very strong convictions of the necessity for the existence of the Church and his obligations to maintain its unity, has been too often wrong in making that unity dependent upon a particular doctrine of the Sacraments in relation to that Ministry: a view which cannot be maintained in the face of historical criticism nor in the light of the modern analysis of Christian experience.

In this connection we would call attention to the *Times*

report (March 30) of the Presidential address delivered by the Rev. Dr. J. D. Jones to the annual assembly of the National Free Church Council. Dr. Jones' address indicates the existence of a movement in Free Church circles towards the recovery of the doctrine of the Universal Church.

'Free Churchmen, in their views of the Church, were apt to be too narrow and parochial. The Church for them was the local fellowship with which they happened to be connected, or at the most the denomination to which they belonged. Their Anglican friends thought much more about the total Church. Free Churchmen were able to be complacent and satisfied just because they thought so little of the Church Universal. The other day one of their leaders spoke of it as an amazing thing that at the Conference on Faith and Order in Edinburgh no fewer than 122 Christian Communions were represented. But was it not more amazing still that there should be 122 separate communions, though several of them held some sort of fellowship with one another? Was it not a shameful thing? And Free Church folk had not been as sensitive to the shame and scandal of it as their Anglican brethren. The Anglicans had in their service a prayer for Christian unity, but the Free Churches for the most part had no sense of shame for their "unhappy divisions," but were quite content to go on as they were . . . I am not suggesting that we should at once sink our differences and come together in one high ecclesiastical organization, but nothing but the conviction that we hold something that is an essential part of the Gospel and which would be obscured or sacrificed if we ceased to be—nothing but that justifies separation. I am a Congregationalist, but I have tried for nearly fifty years to serve my denomination. But I would let the name Congregationalist go if thereby I could help in the creation of a united Free Church of England. That is where the work of union should begin.

'Anything like union with their Anglican friends, he proceeded, was not yet practical politics. Deep differences divided them which it would be foolish to ignore, or even to minimize. He himself would have no difficulty in accepting episcopacy as a method of government. But they could never assent to a theory of the episcopate which made it the sole channel of grace which alone could confer valid orders — orders which were necessary to making the sacraments real sacraments. They hated separation, and longed for the day when Christ's people should be one, but they could never assent to that claim.'

CIVITAS DEI

By G. L. H. Harvey, M.A., Rector of Sutton Coldfield.

THE world to-day is suffering from maladjustment, political, social, and economic. The young, in particular, to whom hope should be a birthright, are oppressed by a double fear. They are afraid that they may not find work by which they can earn a living; they are afraid that they will be engulfed as victims in a war between the nations. The dangers and difficulties which oppress the whole world and overshadow the mind of the young spring, Mr. Lionel Curtis thinks, from one central cause. 'In the course of a few generations human beings have learned to control physical forces without acquiring a like measure of control over themselves and their relations one to another.' It were foolish to dismiss this diagnosis as a mere truism, for as Mr. Curtis says, if it be a truism, it is one which, though vitally important, is commonly disregarded in practice.

In a substantial work extending to three volumes[1] Mr. Curtis seeks to justify his diagnosis and to propound a remedy. Though a Fellow of All Souls, he does not survey the world exclusively through his college window. He says that his life has been mainly that of a political journeyman. That is putting it too low. He has had an experience of practical affairs which falls to the lot of very few, and has played an important part in Imperial business. Among other activities he was Secretary to the Irish Conference of 1921, and from 1921 to 1924 was Adviser on Irish Affairs to the Colonial Office. His work as a publicist is marked by wide knowledge and by accuracy of thought. He says that he doubts whether anything is worth saying unless we can make it intelligible. The clarity of his style reflects the lucidity of his thought.

We have lost our way because we have not followed the light of reason which is the Candle of the Lord. We have become the playthings of gusty emotions. Some exalt into a

[1] *Civitas Dei*, Vol. 1 (1934, 10/6 net); Vol. 2 (1937, 12/6 net); Vol 3 (1937, 5/- net). Published by Macmillan and Co.

religious principle an irrational feeling of shuddering awe. Many accept the dictates of any authority which is sufficiently audacious, while rejecting any criterion by which its claims may be tested. They say in justification that they 'think with the blood.' Faith in reason is replaced by abandonment to some form of *élan vital*. In its Teutonic guise of *Drang* it is sweeping a large part of Western civilization whither we can only surmise with dread. Within the political and religious spheres alike the technique of suggestion and of the cultivation of mass-emotion is practised as a fine art. The worst features of religious intolerance and obscurantism are being reproduced over the whole field of thought and action. The Cheka and the Gestapo are the modern equivalents of the Holy Inquisition; the *Index Expurgatorius* finds its counterpart in an efficient press censorship which puts whole peoples into blinkers. Such is the nemesis of an unrestrained romanticism freed from the controls imposed by the rational judgment.

Among the many wise dicta to be found in *The Wisdom of Solomon* is the saying that ' fear is nothing else but a surrender of the succours which reason offereth.' This surrender Mr. Curtis will not make. He would, he says, have preferred to burn his book before its pages were printed rather than end it on a note of fear and despair. Courage and unflinching loyalty to the guidance of reason are close allies. He strikes the authentic Christian note when he affirms that ' apparent failure, when faced with courage and examined by reason, is the road to superlative triumph.'

The twin bases of Mr. Curtis' faith are a sense of the infinite distinction between right and wrong, and a conviction that mind is the ultimate reality. He is directly conscious of his own intangible personality as something which is not material, and he infers from the existence and actions of other bodies the existence of countless similar personalities. He rejects philosophic materialism because it is inconsistent with the distinction, to him axiomatic, between right and wrong. Reality must be akin to personality, and must therefore be creative and purposive, for personality in its highest form known to us, personality as genius, is creative and is inspired by purpose. In this faith, a

faith grounded on reason, Mr. Curtis finds succour from the fears which the present breeds and the future threatens.

He believes that God means His creatures to use their faculties of moral judgment, freedom of choice, imagination, and creative power as a means to further creation. He believes that through them men can have communion with God.

> 'It rests with man to establish a communion which God always and utterly desires. I believe this communion with final reality, with absolute though invisible goodness, is as real as the intercourse I enjoy with people better than myself. I know by experience the effect on myself of personal contact with friends better than myself. I know, too, the effect of hearing and reading of lives better than my own, pre-eminently that of Jesus of Nazareth. When I think of reality as all such goodness personified in the highest degree, and worship it as such, I am in direct communion with that reality. I am in his company. He draws me nearer his infinite heights than the best of my human friends, the persons I know through my senses. It is this that I mean by worship and prayer, and the influence they have on my life.'

But God is no *deus ex machina*. He does not intervene to reveal truths which men could not discover for themselves. The idea that in some supernatural way God reveals in particular cases what a man ought or ought not to do is a cardinal error.

> 'Such teaching encourages men to evade their primary duty of using and training their reason and practical judgment which God has given to men as their guide.'

Nor does God intervene by way of miracle. The whole system of civilization is based on the assumption that miracles do not happen, and the cumulative evidence against them is overwhelming. But, even if miracles did happen, they would be irrelevant to questions of moral and spiritual truth. 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead.' Revelation is not compulsive, but is accomplished through the activities of the mind. Mr. Curtis understands by miracle 'an effect produced by mind on matter beyond the limits of normal experience.' It is unquestionable that the physical health of a patient is largely affected by the state of his mind and that many people with strong, serene personalities have the power of influencing the minds of sufferers from diseases which are not really organic, and thus benefiting their bodily health. It is clear that Jesus possessed this power in a high degree. Beyond this Mr. Curtis is not prepared to go.

He thinks that the distinction which some make between the Gospel miracles and those of the Old Testament is invalid.

> 'It is usual to draw a sharp distinction between miracles ascribed to Jesus, and acts of magic such as that told of Elisha when he is said to have made iron float, and so reversed the evident physical law that a body must sink so long as its weight is greater than the body of water it displaces. The story of Jesus walking on the water involves a reversal of natural laws equally great. And so do the stories of raising the dead to life. It is possible to restore life when the lungs and even the heart have ceased to act, if an impulse sufficient to restart their action can be given in time. But unless this is done quickly the arteries empty and the blood solidifies in the veins which connect them with the heart. The restoration to life of a man who has really died several hours before, involves magical changes in physical conditions just as crude as the floating of iron on water, but more multifarious.'

Mr. Curtis is prepared to admit that Jesus may have shared the views commonly held in His own day about miracles and even believed in His own power to cure the sick by miraculous means. What is much more significant is that He regarded as Satanic the temptation to appeal to it in proof of the truth of His teaching. So Mr. Curtis reads the story of the Temptation in the Wilderness. At the outset of His career Jesus 'made up His mind to resist the ingrained belief of His hearers that the truths He taught must be proved by miracles.' That the belief nevertheless persisted is shown by the part played by miracles in the Gospel narratives. It persists in some circles to-day.

> 'The idea that a spiritual truth can be proved by a physical miracle was itself the deepest and most comprehensive of all superstitions, and one which persists in our own time.'

Jesus condemned in no measured terms the demand that He should prove His mission by signs, and His reiterated injunctions of silence after He had performed deeds of spiritual healing can only be interpreted as an effort to prevent exaggeration and the spread of the idea that He proved the truth of His teaching by an exercise of magical powers. He failed. His followers were unable to rise above the current idea that divine truth must necessarily be authenticated by miracle, and during the period of oral tradition which preceded the appearance of written Gospels, stories of the miraculous engendered by the ideas of the time developed and spread. Even within the Gospels themselves we can see this process still at work.

'Seek and ye shall find.' Mr. Curtis refuses to allow that there is an antithesis between finding and seeking, between revelation and discovery. They are complementary. The laws of God, which are the realities of existence, have to be learned from experience by the use of human intelligence and conscience. That is why revelation is progressive; that is why each prophet or seer advances from ground won by his predecessors. The progress and continuity of revelation were vastly facilitated by the invention of the art of writing which rendered possible the conservation of past revelation for the benefit of the future. In the writings of the Old Testament we can trace the steps by which, through successive efforts of thought, the majestic conception of Jehovah developed from the cruder and narrower idea of Yahweh, the tribal deity. The belief, natural enough to man in his childhood, that an answer to the riddle of life is revealed in some supernatural way, is baseless. Elijah hears God's voice neither in tempest nor earthquake nor fire, but in 'the still small voice.' Job, when he passionately demands an unmistakable authoritative answer to his questionings, is driven back on the exercise of his own thought. However strong the craving for supernaturally guaranteed authority, men, in the last resort, must have recourse to their own intelligence and conscience. Even the Roman Catholic lady who, when some British officers had been killed in Dublin, said to Mr. Curtis, 'I refuse to call this murder until the Pope tells me it is,' had accepted the doctrine of Papal Infallibility because in the verdict of her own conscience and reason it was true. Similarly, in the last analysis, the Fundamentalist's conviction that the Bible and not the Koran is the Word of God is based on his conscience and reason.

Revelation, discovery, and, Mr. Curtis would certainly add, creativeness, are one and indivisible. Their culmination he finds in the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. He also finds in Him the key to a spiritual eschatology.

> 'The human race is still in its infancy, but a new chapter in its history was opened when one had shown in his life and death what man might hope to become in his prime. My faith is that as men obey the commands of Christ to create a system of society ordered in accordance with the laws of God, that system will bring into being men in his likeness. Others will grow to the stature of Christ, till a time will come when such are the rule and not the exception. The second

coming of Christ may be true in a sense fuller than early Christians conceived.'

Jesus was an optimist. None but an optimist could say, 'Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.' His ultimate aim was the perfection of human character; but He recognized that this was dependent on the creation of a right environment. He realized that 'the souls of men cannot grow to perfection unless the structure of society itself is ordered in accordance with the laws of God, that is to say, founded on verities.' So He preached a Kingdom of God which was 'an organization of human society ordered in accordance with the laws of God.' It is mainly to Israel that we owe the conception that God is goodness in personal form, and that the object of human life is to be like God by achieving goodness and thus co-operating with Him in His creative work. Men serve God and become like Him by serving one another. The Greeks realized that this involved the organization of men in a state on the principle of the infinite duty of each to all, though even the Athenians could not advance beyond the point of regarding this principle as limited to themselves. Jesus in His Gospel of the Kingdom purified, co-ordinated, perfected, and fused into a living unity all that was best in Greek and Hebrew thought. Hellenism and Judaism were in closest contact in Galilee.

> 'Greek culture and paganism, protected by Rome on the shores of Gennesareth, was a constant irritant to the Jews of Galilee, and they to the Greeks. A region where opposite systems of life are approaching their conflict is a hotbed of ideas. . . . We are safe in assuming that the principles and merits of Jewish and Greek civilisation were the chief subject of discussion in Galilee during the first thirty years of the Christian era. Conventional pictures of Jesus, calmly maturing his thoughts in the quiet and retirement of rustic seclusion, are at variance with obvious facts. Such conditions could no more exist in the Galilee of that time than they could in our own, in Tyrone or Fermanagh. From the rising of Judas[2] to the fall of Jerusalem the valleys where Jesus spent his youth were a furnace of revolution. He analysed life and studied its elements in a crucible white with heat.'

During the sojourn in the wilderness which followed His baptism, Jesus rejected as Satanic the temptation to appeal to miracle in proof of the truth of His teaching. He also rejected the temptation to lead a revolutionary movement. He saw the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them united in sub-

[2] Judas of Galilee, the Zealot insurrectionary.—G.L.H.H.

jection to Rome and Greece. Mr. Curtis considers that gifts such as His, devoted to leading a Jewish revolt against Graeco-Roman civilization, would have changed the current of history. It was a tempting prospect. 'With lesser gifts Hannibal had shaken the foundations of Rome; and Jerusalem enshrined ideals higher than those of Carthage.' But He turned His back on it. He had a greater mission, the enunciation of the principles on which alone any social order worthy to be called the Kingdom of God could be based.

The age which followed that of the early Maccabees was, for the Jews, one of tragic frustration. Despair drove the Zealots into the fanaticism which, in due course, led to national ruin. The same despair drove others to apocalyptic dreams. These looked for a final and miraculous intervention by God. It was the only hope left. The world was derelict, and salvation could only come from outside and above. It is significant that our present distresses have evoked a revival of apocalypticism. Again, there is a questioning whether the spirit of man be indeed the candle of the Lord. Again many are disposed to reject 'the succours which reason offereth,' and to seek refuge in some form of other-worldly faith. Mr. Curtis believes that recorded sayings of our Lord, and in particular His parabolic teaching, show that His vision of the Kingdom of God was independent of apocalyptic machinery, though He may have used figurative language of an apocalyptic character. He holds that the two translations, 'The Kingdom of God is within you,' and 'The Kingdom of God is among you,' are both true to His thought. The fundamental laws of the Kingdom, love of God and love of neighbour, have no connection with eschatological dreams. But, just as the miraculous is interwoven with the accounts of the life of Jesus which have come down to us, so the reports of His teaching about the Kingdom are coloured by apocalyptic thought. As the miraculous element is due to the current belief about miracles, so the apocalyptic colouring is due to the medium of transmission.

> 'Jesus saw in human conscience the foundation of all things, and saw no bounds to its capacity for growth. . . . The minds of his Jewish hearers were filled with nationalist dreams of the Kingdom of God. He endeavoured to teach them wherein the Kingdom of God lay, and

> to convince them that the true Kingdom of the real God could only be based on the instinct in men to do good to each other. This instinct, he urged, would respond to exercise and was capable of infinite growth in a polity so organized as to call it into play. These ideas are implicit in sayings and parables remembered and recorded by followers who failed to grasp their profound significance. They interpreted his idea of the Kingdom of God in terms of Jewish apocalypse.'

S. Paul liberated Christianity from narrow Judaic ritualism and legalism, and so made it potentially a world religion. But he could not free himself from the apocalyptic supernaturalism of his early Pharisaic training. He exercised a powerful influence on subsequent Christian thought in the direction of a divorce between the Kingdom of God and the life of men in this world. His influence was reinforced by events, for men who faced the hatred and persecution which were the lot of the early Christians readily regarded the world which sought to crush them and their faith as the Kingdom of Satan. S. Augustine crystallized and systematized the conception that the Kingdom of God was alien from a world which, with S. Paul, he thought was doomed to early destruction. S. Augustine, as Mr. Curtis points out, stamped on the Christian mind the attitude described by Rousseau in *The Social Contract*:

> 'Christianity is an entirely spiritual religion concerned solely with heavenly things; the Christian's country is not of this world. He does his duty, it is true; but he does it with a profound indifference as to the good or ill success of his endeavours. Provided that he has nothing to reproach himself with, it matters little to him whether all goes well or ill here below. If the State flourishes, he scarcely dares to enjoy the public felicity. If the State declines, he blesses the hand of God which lies heavy on his people.'

The removal of the Kingdom of God to a supernatural plane, with the accompanying conception that the Church on earth is a temporary shelter for the few who will inherit the Kingdom on Christ's return in apocalyptic splendour to destroy and recreate the universe, carried with it the conception of authority as external and imposed from above. The authority of reason and conscience is no longer regarded as final. So far from the spirit of man being the candle of the Lord, the light, such as it is, shines forth in the pronouncements of the Church. Persecution finds a logical basis and a justification. Authoritarianism of this kind satisfies the widespread craving for certainty, and has its best

opportunity in times of distress and anxiety. The new creeds of our own day lay claim to the same kind of absolute authority.

> 'The kind of people who in past generations found the asylum they needed in the Roman Church and in Islam are now drawn in increasing numbers to the Communist Party or that of the Nazis, which demand absolute acceptance of the doctrines propounded by Marx or Hitler.'

Mr. Curtis believes that the onward and upward march of man has been checked by reaching the edge of a chasm, and that, unless the chasm is bridged in time, the national states will force each other into it to their mutual destruction. He sees no salvation in the various brands of authoritarianism which summon men to enlist under their respective banners. The way to salvation is to learn afresh the teaching of Jesus about the Kingdom of God and to strive to create a Commonwealth the members of which live on earth as children of God. He appeals to human experience, to human conscience, and to human reason. These constitute the only authority to which we ought to bow. In and through them we have the divine revelation. In Jesus we have a revelation of what man may be, and through Him we have our clearest vision of God.

> 'His life is the crown of human experience. It enabled men thereafter to grasp what human personality at its highest can be. If final reality is something of the nature of my own personality raised to the infinite scale, the personality of Jesus is the highest clue that men have to the nature of God.'

The Kingdom of God as conceived by Jesus was in fact, though the language He spoke had no word to express the idea, a Commonwealth. Its principle was the infinite duty of its members one to another, a duty inseparable from their infinite duty to God. In the whole history of the human race Mr. Curtis finds no time so fraught with disaster as the present. 'As a record of sheer frustration what chapter in history compares with that which the nations have written for themselves since the war?' he asks. He calls himself a 'political journeyman.' As such he is convinced that the only way out of its confusions for a troubled world is to seek first the Kingdom or Commonwealth of God, an organization of human society based on those laws of God which are the realities and must be learned from experience by the use of human intelligence and conscience. The principle

of national sovereignty is not the last word in political construction. If it is so regarded our civilization will be threatened with dangers greater than those which overwhelmed Graeco-Roman civilization.

> 'We have now reached a stage in the growth of civilisation which cannot go further, and is doomed to go back, until we discover the means of passing from the national to the international state, to the state in the truest and fullest sense of that word. We can, I believe, discover those means if, feeling the awful danger of war, we do not allow our fears to betray the succours which reason offers. Since that distant age, when a knowledge of good and evil dawned on the minds of creatures living in forests and caves, they have gone from strength to strength. Human nature has made immeasurable strides since our Lord showed in his own person how divine it can be. But it cannot advance further till men learn to think of the scheme of human relations which he conceived as one to be brought from the realm of dreams to the earth in which they live, to be made incarnate in the flesh and blood of a living society. That is the world situation, as I see it, to-day.'

THE LAWYER'S VIEW OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL

By Sir Alexander Lawrence, Bt., M.A.

A RECENT review of a book on the Fourth Gospel in the *Modern Churchman* prompts me to put on paper the impressions produced by that Gospel on a layman who has had experience in weighing legal evidence, but who has not read any of the Early Fathers or of the Higher Critics, and who approaches the problem as though it concerned the authenticity of a doubtful book of the Odyssey, or a letter of Plato, or a biography by Plutarch.

The first impression is that the book falls into two distinct halves. After the raising of Lazarus in chapter xi it reads like a continuous narrative by an eye-witness of great literary ability and with inside knowledge of events, particularly of the Caiaphas household, so that he could safely come into the 'palace of Caiaphas' where Jesus was being tried, although, when he used his privileged position to bring in Peter, suspicion was at once

aroused. The detailed account of two different bystanders successively identifying Peter, one of them being 'his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off,' strikes one as essentially the narrative of an eye-witness.

Similarly it is significant to be told how Annas, who received Jesus into custody and sent Him for trial, was father-in-law of Caiaphas, the High Priest for that same year, who actually tried Jesus and whose dictum, 'that it was expedient that one man should die for the people,' was known to the Author, although it was delivered at a 'Council of Pharisees and Chief Priests' whose proceedings in such a matter must surely have been meant to be confidential.

The author of this Gospel afterwards gives these words a mystical meaning as referring to the sacrifice of Jesus to save mankind, but we may be sure that this was not present to the mind of Caiaphas when the words were spoken; for this same evangelist has elsewhere recorded this saying of Caiaphas in its verbatim context, which makes his meaning abundantly clear. 'What do we?' asked the Councillors, 'for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.' 'Ye know nothing at all,' replies Caiaphas, 'nor consider that it is expedient *for us* that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perish not.'

This advice may therefore be taken as representing the considered view of the Governing Body of the Jewish Church, and it was a well-founded view for anyone who was not convinced either that Jesus was God or that, in spite of the enthusiasm of His followers, He would be both able and willing to prevent them from attempting to restore Jewish sovereignty in Palestine, which everyone would expect the long-predicted Messiah to accomplish.

It must be remembered that, within the lifetime of men present at that Council, the religious enthusiasm of some of the Jews did in fact provoke the Romans 'to come and take away their place and nation.' The ecclesiastical authorities of that day saw themselves threatened, not only with disestablishment and disendowment, but also with national ruin.

No doubt if Jesus had reappeared in the same character at any time before the Reformation, or at Geneva under Calvin, His claim to be God and His threat to vested ecclesiastical interests might have sent Him to the stake like Joan of Arc or Servetus, but that fate would have been far more certain if His movement had seemed to threaten all Christendom with such a catastrophe as did in fact befall the Balkan Christians at the hands of the Turks.

In the Fourth Gospel it stands out that it was the raising of Lazarus that brought matters to a climax and made the Ecclesiastical Authorities feel that the movement was politically so dangerous that it must in some way be stopped. The politic Caiaphas is not recorded as joining in the outcry against alleged blasphemy on the part of Jesus, although, given the doctrines of the Jewish religion, a claim to divinity would have been a capital offence just as much as, given the doctrines of St. Augustine and his successors, it was right for the Church to exterminate heretics. The 'opinion' of Caiaphas is simply that in view of the immense popularity and enthusiasm excited by this man's supposed power of restoring the dead to life, the political danger is too terrible to be overlooked, and, whatever His personal character, He must not be allowed to live and jeopardise the existence of the Jewish national home in Palestine. One seems to see the theological hostility of the orthodox at last reinforced by the many adherents of Mr. Worldly Wiseman and so made strong enough to take decisive action. But it is in the Fourth Gospel, rather than in the other three, that we best see how infuriating to the orthodox Jew the doctrines of Jesus must have been.

The later part of the Fourth Gospel also discloses to us that it was immediately after the debate in the Council that orders were given to arrest Jesus, wherever found, and that this order could not be executed because He 'walked no more openly among the Jews but went thence into a country near to the wilderness.' Then 'they spoke among themselves, as they stood in the Temple, "What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?"' He did come, but the crowds of His worshippers made His arrest impossible until He could be found unprotected

by them, and one may conclude that this popular enthusiasm made the Pharisees and Chief Priests feel it all the more essential that this dangerous man should be removed.

Thus it is in the later chapters of the Fourth Gospel that the evangelist gives us the clue to the motives of the prosecution and the many graphic details, absent from the other gospels, seem to me to speak from the first-hand knowledge of a well-informed contemporary. It would take a great deal of expert evidence to alter my view on this point.

When, however, I return to the first ten chapters of the book, I find them quite different from those that follow. They seem like a mosaic, incorporating many precious jewels, but put together with no great skill and with a conscious purpose to establish three things: firstly, that Jesus continually claimed to be God and to have been alive before Abraham; and secondly, that He not only definitely foretold His crucifixion but also taught, long before the Last Supper, the doctrine of the Holy Communion and the miraculous virtue of His body as the bread of life; and thirdly, that He always knew Judas Iscariot to be a 'devil,' but for some divine reason allowed him to get and retain the status of one of the twelve specially chosen Disciples, not yet known as Apostles. It is possible that in the mind of the writer the first of these propositions may be merely a philosophical reference to the timelessness of eternity, but it can hardly have been so regarded by the ordinary reader or hearer of the Apostles' own generation. The keynote of the second proposition is struck in the first five verses about the pre-existence of the Logos, which would be hardly intelligible if nothing was known of the philosophy of Philo; so that these verses strike one as coming from a post-apostolic age, or at all events from a time when Christian theology had developed a good deal; although, if a very young disciple lived to a very great age, they might conceivably have been written before his death.

These passages occur only in the first eleven chapters and they raise similar doubts as to the date of compilation of that whole mosaic, but they do not affect one's view of the authority of the remaining chapters if a separate authorship for these is accepted.

Nevertheless, one must beware of drawing such conclusions with too great confidence. Tennyson really did write of 'the Parliament of man, the federation of the World,' and 'saw the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue' and published *Locksley Hall*, containing these lines, in quite early Victorian times; if, however, no earlier edition of his work should survive, I can well imagine a Tübingen professor, one thousand years hence, contending that the poem could not have been written before 1920 or else that these lines are an interpolation.

Similarly he might find in the first thirty lines of Lycidas plausible grounds for contending that Milton was not its author and that the text is corrupt and incomplete. For instance, after addressing the Muses as 'sisters,' who are to '*somewhat loudly* sweep the string' (a Latinism unparalleled in the real Milton), the author, in the same sentence, changes their sex and refers to a 'Gentle Muse' as 'he,' who is to 'turn and with lucky words favour my destined urn' (a most unmiltonic phrase), and the same sentence gives as a reason for all this the fact that 'we' (*i.e.* the author and the late Mr. King) were 'nursed upon the selfsame *hill*' and were in the habit of spending the night together out of doors 'till the *high lawns* appeared.' The learned commentator might find good evidence that King and Milton only met, long after their 'nursing' age, as undergraduates at Cambridge, where 'hills' and 'high lawns' are unknown, and where well-behaved youths like Milton do not habitually abscond from their college to spend the night outdoors with flocks of sheep. A few lines later he would find the verb 'heard' used without an object, for the text says 'when' they heard it, but not 'what' they heard; and after pointing out that this is quite different from the intransitive use of 'hearest thou' in *Paradise Lost*, he might confidently conclude that 'he' is a corrupt reading for 'she,' that one or more lines are missing before 'For we were nursed' and after 'heard,' and that the author of the poem is some inferior poet who had known King in their 'nursery days' in some more hilly neighbourhood than Cambridge.

Finally he might conclude that the poem, or at all events part of it, could not have been written before 1900, because it

refers to the grey fly winding her sultry horn, and it was not discovered until the beginning of the twentieth century that it is only the *female* mosquito which hums and bites.

Such reasoning is hardly a caricature of some of the arguments that have been used to prove the multiple authorship of Homer; and yet we possess the actual manuscript of Lycidas, with final autograph revisions by Milton himself, and we know that he paid great attention to the spelling of his published poetry.

However, after making due allowance for the risk of applying too great subtlety to the study of old manuscripts, I still find it difficult to suppose that the whole of the Fourth Gospel was writen at the same time and by the same person.

Assuming a post-apostolic date for either the whole or the first ten chapters of the Fourth Gospel, it is all the more remarkable that it contains no reference to the Virgin Birth, which must by that time have been the established doctrine. It is indeed pretty clear from the other Gospels that during the Ministry of Jesus nothing was publicly known of it; otherwise one cannot suppose that it would not have been mentioned, either by His friends as supporting His claim to divinity, or by His enemies as an additional count in the charge of blasphemy, or as a mere matter of scandal against a supposed bastard. But on the contrary He is treated everywhere as the son of Joseph the Carpenter, the brother of Mary's other children and the descendant of David, who was Joseph's ancestor but not Mary's. Moreover, when it is contended that he cannot be the Messiah because the Messiah must be born at Bethlehem and cannot 'come out of Galilee,' no one replies that he was in fact born at Bethlehem. This, however, in no way disproves the story of his miraculous birth, which might well have been kept secret during His life among the very small circle in which He was known, and disclosed only after His Resurrection had done something to diminish its intrinsic improbability. If the carpenter of Nazareth had claimed a miraculous origin for his wife's eldest child, he could hardly have hoped to do more than discredit her character and the boy's future, and it is by no means clear that Jesus Himself was aware

of the events recorded in the first chapters of Matthew and Luke. It confirms the credibility of all four Gospels that they nowhere seek to further this momentous belief by inserting in their narrative any confirmation by Jesus Himself, and the later the date we assign to the Fourth Gospel, the more remarkable does this reticence become.

There remain two other main features in which the Fourth Gospel differs from the other three, namely, a very noticeable difference in the picture of Jesus' reception by the public and an alleged discrepancy in the account of the Resurrection. Whereas the Synoptists show us a picture of a man generally beloved and sought by admiring crowds, the first half of the Fourth Gospel lays more stress on the hostility that He provoked and continual threats to His life. Both pictures may very well be correct, but it seems to show on the part of the compiler a dislike of the Jews not felt by any of the other evangelists.

As to the resurrection, however, the discrepancies do not really amount to any incompatibility, especially if it be accepted that the Gospels were not dictated verbatim by the Holy Ghost, and that they were not written down till at all events some years after the event, and that not all of the Evangelists were eye-witnesses. Even when four honest witnesses of a motor accident describe it in court only a few months after the event, their accounts of it often prove to be quite inconsistent with one another, but we do not therefore conclude that no accident took place or that any of them are liars.

I will not apologize for intruding where so many learned divines have trod and do tread. I shall expect some of them to tread heavily on the views I have expressed, for I am so inexpert in this field that I do not even know how many, if any, of them are commonly held. It may, however, be of some interest, to those who are concerned with the psychology of the lay Churchman, to hear how one of that body regards that fascinating little book, 'the Gospel according to St. John.'

THE VACUUM

By J. C. Hardwick, M.A., B.Sc.

THE agnostics, atheists, and freethinkers of the nineteenth century were for the most part a high-minded, sincere, altruistic, and idealistic set of men and women. They were earnest, sternly moral — not to say puritanical — and were convinced that in freeing their fellow-men from their superstitions they were doing them a service and helping to hasten the advent of the millenium.

But they were not only earnest and optimistic; they were happy and contented. Most of them were engaged in the most fascinating of occupations — scientific research or literary production. Charles Darwin, though his health was poor, spent many happy years profitably employed in collecting material for proving his theory of the origin of species. Portraits of T. H. Huxley, his foremost propagandist, reveal a confident, healthy, energetic personality. Logically, their theories ought to have made life seem meaningless to them. According to Huxley, for example, consciousness was an 'epiphenomenon' — a kind of phosphorescence—which one would have thought would reduce life to the nadir of insignificance. But Huxley, to judge by the look of him, enjoyed every minute of his life. He must have derived no end of satisfaction from dealing blows such as he bestowed upon Soapy Sam on a notorious occasion in Oxford. These unbelievers and iconoclasts got plenty of kick out of life.

But alas, like most of us, these men (and they were great men, too, which we are not) did not know what they were doing. They were robustly knocking away the props upon which human life rested. Busy with research, propaganda, and literary enterprises, they did not realize this. *Their* lives had meaning; so what did it matter if life in general now had no meaning?

There is a time-lag about the progress of ideas; in general it takes anything from thirty to forty years for the ideas of the *intelligentsia* to seep down into the ranks of the low-brows. Thus so long as the Victorian agnostics were alive, the seeds

they sowed hardly showed above ground. The great majority of the public continued to live in happy ignorance that its props had gone. Though their religious duties may have been honoured more in the breach than the observance, nevertheless their lives had some kind of religious foundation, and still possessed a meaning. The public read Fitzgerald's imaginatively discursive translations of the old Persian freethinker, but did not take them too seriously. Yet Omar, and the unamended, uncensored version of *Ecclesiastes*, were really giving expression to a valuation of life which differed little from that of the Victorian agnostics. All was vanity — emptiness. If man is a mechanism, and consciousness an epiphenomenon, what possible point can there be in life? Even to be pessimistic about life would be to pay it a compliment — to give it a meaning (albeit a bad one), when it really had none.

But in due course people began to wake up to the fact that human life had no meaning whatever, and reacted according to their natures. Some hoped to give life a meaning by having a good time. Up to a point they were successful, but the trouble is that, as things are at present constituted, not everyone can have a good time. There is not enough cash, or energy, or health, or beauty to go round. Someone must go short, and the man who does so feels a grievance against life. And since he cannot make God or the devil responsible, he puts the blame on his fellow-man — the capitalist, the Jew, or the foreigner. This means trouble.

People began to feel that this kind of thing could not go on. Perhaps they were only subconsciously aware of it, but they did now become aware of the existence of a vacuum — a vacuum which must somehow be filled unless everyone was to perish of boredom, like certain tribes of Pacific Islanders. Deprived of its foundations, life began to topple in all directions. Professor Huxley had done his job with an efficiency revealed in that resolute, pugnacious head. The props had gone. Life went on as usual, but underneath was a cavity — a cavity *which must be filled*. The plain man, since the old religion had been tossed into the discard, must have a new religion, and one with no nonsense about it—one in whose tenets he could believe, and whose ethic he could practise. Nature abhors a vacuum.

It is a sound principle of economics that demand creates supply. Two new religions soon appeared. Nor were these any vague, highbrow, cultured, academic creeds such as were the few substitutes which well-meaning people like the Positivists had offered to a hungry world, eager for bread, not stones. The masses want something other than a speculative creed with no blood in its veins, and with no affirmations to fling at you to take for your salvation, or to reject at your peril. The masses want *beliefs* and slogans. Something to give a real meaning to life; something to march to, an objective; something that can speak with the sound of a trumpet. A religion to set the crowds shouting, the troops marching. A religion to make the guns go off; a religion to make the little man feel big. That is the stuff the people want if the vacuum is to be filled!

It is a mistake to imagine that the ordinary man and woman can be satisfied for long by a life without meaning. The scientist, artist, or literary man can get along perfectly well on a negative creed, for his life is full enough of satisfying activity. But the individual who spends his days in drudgery, and perhaps also in penury, needs something to make life worth living. True, an indulgence in alcohol may serve to admit a roseate ray into the general squalor; but drink is a substitute; it can never quite take the place of religion.

Hence the two new religions, Fascism and Communism, which nowadays are both 'youth movements.' How amusing it must be for the denizens of Olympus to watch the middle-aged organizing youth movements which at once begin to move in the wrong direction!

To describe these two new religions is hardly necessary, since their nature is well known. The point to be noticed about both is that the materialist can be an adherent of either religion. Communism, indeed, stresses materialism and embodies it as part of its creed. But the same congruity with a materialistic outlook characterizes Fascism, of which the deity is the race or nation, incarnate in the 'Leader.' The point is that either of these religions can be held and practised by adherents who accept the conclusions of nineteenth century agnostics and atheists. And these new religions give to life a meaning of which it had been deprived. The devout Fascist feels himself to be a

part of a greater whole, while the Communist feels himself to be struggling for the emergence of a new world. Both religions worship organized human power, which means that, inasmuch as (to use theological terminology) they worship the creature and not the Creator, they are both forms of idolatry.

Though it is no part of our present business to compare these rival cults with one another, it may be said that there is more to be expected from Communism, which looks to the future, than from Fascism, which seeks only to preserve what is old and in decay. But whatever their merits or demerits, both alike have *drive*, and men will readily shed their blood for either. Indeed, Europe may well be entering upon an epoch of wars of religion. That, however, is another story, which we need not enter upon here.

If the Victorian agnostics could step out of their graves, we may be pretty sure that they would be anxious to get back again as quickly as possible, since the spectacle of modern Europe would appal such humane and idealistic men. And if told that this is what comes of knocking away props and creating vacuums, they would be incredulous. Yet such is the plain fact; we owe the present state of affairs largely to those gentlemen—honest, sincere, high-minded, intelligent as they indubitably were.

What is to be done about it? Some of our intellectuals solve the problem by urging a return to the bosom of the Catholic Church. They declare that this is the only effective alternative to the new idolatries. They insist that all our troubles began when men first began at the Reformation to revolt against the authority of the Church. First came Protestantism, then Liberalism, then atheism — a logical and inevitable progression downwards. The only thing to do, they say, is resolutely to turn our backs on the liberal tradition. The first liberal was the devil. Such an invitation naturally meets with many acceptances; if the present looks grim, and the future still grimmer, the natural thing is to beat a retreat. Perhaps one can get safely back before the deluge breaks.

No one would wish to blame our intellectuals, still less those who can hardly claim to be intellectuals, for panicking a little in these days. After all, if a bomb-proof shelter is anywhere handy, why not get into it? Noah's ark survived the deluge . . .

But there may be some, a small minority doubtless, who feel that liberalism is in their blood, and that they would be false to themselves if they beat it into shelter. What programme is there for this remnant to follow? What must they do to be saved? They do not care for the new idolatries, and yet they cannot make the pilgrimage to Canossa. Perhaps it might be good for them if they did; but they *cannot*. It goes against the grain. Well, let them sit down patiently and count their assets. The chief of these is that materialism, the philosophy of the new religions, is discredited. Thought has moved on; and in thirty years, with luck, the masses will be alive to it (unless the new religions deprive them altogether of the power of thought, which seems not unlikely).

This perhaps will not carry the liberal remnant very far. Materialism may be done for theoretically, but idealism of the type of F. H. Bradley will not convert the masses. *Mein Kampf* is a more forcible book than *Appearance and Reality*, and so is *Das Kapital*. No; idealism, if it is to cut any ice, must slip out of the Oxford cloister, drop the academic gown and put on dungarees. A boiler-suit is the garb of the new age. Perhaps the New Physics is more helpful; but the New Physics is abstruse. The plain man is not a higher mathematician. No; the New Physics will not do either—not even the New Astronomy, though Sir James Jeans's works are best-sellers. It is all useful, but it wants transforming—just as Marx transformed Hegelian dialectics into a religion, which surely proves that Marx was a genius or a magician. Now who will transform Bradley and the Quantum mechanics into a religion—a religion for the masses, with drive equivalent to that Nazi-ism, Communism, or Catholicism in the days when it was really *believed*? Can the liberals produce the magician . . . the prophet? If they can produce him, the future is with them. If not, well, there is nothing for it but the Dark Age.

Of course there was Mrs. Eddy. Yes, one can sense the shock which the perusal of this name has caused the reader. Mrs. Eddy—a charlatan, an American, a deceiver of the masses who lined her own pocket. Yes, we may admit that Mrs. Eddy was no highbrow, and she made money (though even bishops enjoy good incomes, we must remember). If money is dirt you

can always wear gloves. . . . But the point about Mrs. Eddy, if you can persuade yourself to take a look at her (you need not go close up—just one distant glance cannot harm you), is that she did transmute Emersonian optimism and idealism (I mean the technical philosophical kind) into a religion for the masses. But *what* a religion, you will say!

Yes, a curious type of religion, to be sure; no kind of a religion for a University professor; perhaps not a religion for a gentleman. But yet a *religion*; there is no denying that. And somehow it caught on. After all, the fact that Mrs. Eddy made money proves something. If you or I started a religion, *we* should need subsidizing—heavily. The real point about the Eddy religion was that *it was a religion of present experience*, and it did deliver the goods! And it was thoroughly *non-materialistic*. Mrs. Eddy taught the masses that matter did not count, *and they believed her*, and found it worked! Mr. F. H. Bradley would have been powerless to do that. And of course Mrs. Eddy was not telling them a lie. She was more nearly right than Professor Huxley with his talk of consciousness as "epiphenomenon' (he even had to invent the word). Matter does not really count at all; mind and will are everything. If you don't believe that, you are a materialist, whatever you may call yourself. And while bishops and clergy were all talking about miracles in the past, Mrs. Eddy was showing people miracles in the present. That was where she scored.

No, I am not doing propaganda for Mrs. Eddy. But Mrs. Eddy is an example of the kind of thing we want. We want someone to discredit materialism in the eyes of the masses, to make the masses revolt against it as an abominable superstition (which is what it is), robbing life of all meaning and value, not to speak of health and happiness. This will only be done by showing what belief in mind and will and spirit *can* achieve. It will be done by showing what prayer can achieve . . . by giving us a technique whereby we may unlock the spiritual energies imprisoned in each of us.

A merely analytical, critical, and negative liberalism is of no use whatever—not, at any rate, for giving us the new religion. We want a positive creed which works, and which works because it is true. The liberal must assemble the parts; he must

be constructive, imaginative, creative. And his line must be not merely to attack materialism, but to show that mind and will are active realities *not* subordinate to matter, but able to command it and mould it.

He must have his clear-cut theory of God, and of the devil, too, if he likes. But the theory must be one that people can lay hold of and *use*. The God in whom people used to believe, and who actually influenced their lives, was up in the sky, just as the devil was down below. Astronomy and geology, both materialistic, have destroyed these notions, and with the majority of people they have not been replaced. Academic idealists have disposed of space and time; even the physicists have transformed these categories; but what is needed is to make this non-materialistic standpoint available for *use*, just as Mrs. Eddy made Emersonian idealism available for use even by Middle Westerners and denizens of Birmingham. Have the liberals enough creative force and personal drive to get these notions converted into power available for the purposes of life?

Perhaps the new creed will teach that God and the devil are both inside a man ('God that worketh in you both to will and to do,' etc.). But this will remain mere immanentist sentimentality unless it is united with a technique and a purposive programme. God may be the power of life, of light, of affirmation, of joy, of health; and the devil the opposite of these things. But such notions remain mere ideas unless they can be utilised and applied in action. There must be a technique of mind-training, of meditation, of self-recollection, of prayer—all based on the belief that God can do *anything*, that the power of spirit is positively unlimited. The doctrine, and the practice, is all there in the New Testament. It is so obvious and ubiquitous there that it positively escapes notice! The primary doctrine must be that materialism is nonsense—poisonous, deadly, negative nonsense; the devil's own doctrine; the doctrine of 'this world,' if you talk in Johannine terms. Denunciations, of course, will not be enough; they will not even be necessary if the opposite doctrine is practised. The opposite doctrine may be to the scientists 'foolishness'; but 'God hath chosen the foolish things,' etc.

This renewal of primitive Christianity (for this is what it amounts to) will have nothing to fear from either of the material-

istically based religions which we have mentioned above. Both of *them* find the significance of life *outside* the individual — in the State or the System. But the non-materialistic religion will teach the individual to find life's significance in its spiritual source and foundation, God—a God not of speculation, but of experience and of action. Communism and Fascism are organized material power involving the subjugation of the individual, who is life's growing-point. The materialistic cults mean death, since they destroy the sources of life. But how could it be otherwise, when they are based on materialism, the doctrine of death?

Fascism and Communism both claim to be able to redeem a sick society — a society which is sick through materialism is to be cured by an undiluted dose of materialism! But can Satan cast out Satan? Only by a clean break with materialistic doctrines can social health come. The right course is to turn the back resolutely on all the standards and ideals (if they can be called so) before which we have been accustomed to prostrate ourselves. The money and power calculus must be repudiated, as also must the debilitating theory that matter is more powerful than spirit and limits its operations. The new religion needs its apostles of poverty as well as its workers of miracles. If it cannot produce such it will lack the vitality to conquer its rivals, who have money, guns and scientists at their back. And even with all that backing these new pagan cults cannot banish fear!

A new theology? Yes, a theology is useful, but a religion which is alive creates its own theology—a number of theologies, in fact, one after the other in a stream. What we need to-day is a religion, one to rival the materialistic cults which seem so omnipotent. The theologies will follow soon enough.

If the prognostications above outlined are in any measure correct, the religious revival will come from a new perception of the power of the spirit and the impotence of matter. The parables of the Importunate Widow and the Friend at Midnight must be taken literally! This is a hard saying for persons with a scientific education to accept. Yet it is either that or materialism, for the plain man. And which is it to be?

BOOK REVIEWS

A HUMANIST ON CHRISTIAN DOGMA*

Mr. Edward Motley Pickman has committed himself to a bold adventure. He has set out to describe from an independent standpoint the greatest change that has ever passed over the soul of man, the change from Paganism to Christianity. An American, brought up, he tells us, in 'the thin atmosphere of Unitarianism,' faith had died in him leaving no trace. But as he studied the past, and Europe is America's past, he was brought up in every century against 'the gigantic phenomenon' of Christianity. How was he to understand this history of ours? Must he become a Christian in order to be an historian? Was he otherwise doomed to view Christianity—as Gibbon did—in the guise of a superstition clogging the progress of mankind?

We all know that Mr. Pickman does not stand alone; there are many to-day who are Christians in feeling if not in faith; such are Charles Maurras and Maurice Barrès at the present day in France; such were, perhaps, Carlyle and Ruskin and Matthew Arnold in Victorian England. The challenge of atheistic Communism with its philosophy, if such it can be called, of dialectical materialism, as destructive of the old-time Rationalism as it is of anything that can be called Christianity, impels them towards the Christian camp. But they cannot barter their spiritual integrity or swallow beliefs against which their reason revolts. A sharp conflict of ideologies is manifestly upon us; Europe is about to be ranged into hostile camps. It is no time to drive into the enemy ranks or to consign to heartbreaking isolation anyone who has the root of the matter in him.

Mr. Pickman, at any rate, is profoundly convinced that the coming of Christianity marked an important stage in our pilgrimage from shadows to reality, from childhood to man's estate. Herein he is at issue with a powerful stream of tendency which runs through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Gibbon implicitly and Professor Bury, for example, explicitly taught that Christianity was a retrogression, a step back into the darkness. Take the headings of Bury's *History of Freedom of Thought*: 'Reason Free,' 'Reason in Prison,' 'Prospect of Deliverance' (the Renaissance and the Reformation); there in diagrammatic form you have the story of man's wanderings as the so-called Rationalist saw it, though all Rationalists were not quite so frank or so *naif* as Bury.

According to Mr. Pickman, however, Christianity is not the jailor who locks reason up but rather the bringer of the good news that man is set free from the dominion of Giant Despair. Man, in the Pagan view, was the slave of Destiny; history was a series of cycles; true progress was impossible. 'Even to Plotinus, man's earthly life seemed largely at the mercy of a blind chance or destiny.'

* *The Mind of Latin Christendom.* By Edward Motley Pickman. (Oxford University Press. 1937. 21/-.)

Upon the practical Roman the philosophical view that evil was simply an illusion made little impression. Christ's revelation indicated to men how a benevolent and almighty God could rule a world of evil.

> 'God the Father was Jehovah—more conspicuous for His omnipotence than His benevolence; God the Son was Christ who helplessly died upon the cross because he loved men. Yet these two Gods were one God. As a philosophy the conception was wretched; even a student would be mortified to propound such a doctrine. But the doctrine did not come in a philosophical treatise, it came instead in a huge and wonderful book which revealed a whole real world. That the revelation revealed a paradox simply proved the reality of paradox —in itself a revelation of the first order' (p. 44).

The adventure of trying to create a Christian philosophy was the life-work of Augustine, of whose spiritual pilgrimage through Paganism, the dualism of the Manichees, and neo-Platonism a fascinating account is given. Mr. Pickman points to the Achilles' heel in the *philosophia perennis* which Aquinas and Calvin have derived from Augustine, the belief in the historical fall of Adam. None the less, as all serious thinkers are beginning to discover at the present day, its permanent value as a contribution to human thought remains.

The name of Augustine is especially connected with his doctrine of predestination. For more than a century this whole question has been virtually shelved. Milton represents the evil spirits discussing it in Hell, and we have certainly banished it to Limbo.

> 'Augustine's doctrine of predestination . . . is as elusive as it is lucid. It is exceptionally hard for us to understand, chiefly because we have never made the effort. In the sixteenth century, when the Calvinists revived his doctrine, and in the seventeenth, when the Jansenists also accepted it, the problem was understood because it tortured the minds of many of the greatest men of that time. To-day it is academic history, but since it was not such in the fifth and sixth, nor in the sixteenth and seventeenth, its future recrudescence is still a contingency—the more so because it raises—quite apart from formal religion—not only a fundamental, but also an unsolved issue' (p. 389).

The practical man of to-day will wonder as he reads this exhaustive account of the development of Christian philosophy why all this intellectual and spiritual activity, all this asceticism and practical benevolence, did not save the Roman Empire and ancient culture from the collapse into the Dark Ages. Modern ecclesiastics are fond of advertising Christianity as a cure for social evils, war, and physical suffering. What did Christians do, the average reader may ask, to repel the barbarian invader or to bring about social reform within the Empire? Did the Church fail because temporal and material needs were too much subordinated to inner regeneration? The truth seems to be that the Church did not particularly want to save the State.

> 'That we to-day are unable to imagine a civilisation apart from a political State does not prove that no other people ever imagined

this; it merely proves that we have not the imagination to see ourselves from the outside and others from the inside' (p. 146).

Yet ordinary men in the fifth century were puzzled at the fact that the conversion of the Roman world had not brought prosperity. We remember that during the Great War and in the subsequent years we were told by our religious leaders in this country, and no doubt the same sort of thing was said in Germany, that we had shown exceptional heroism in taking up the sword of justice and sacrificing ourselves for the good of the world; it remained to be explained why the only reward we got was that everything seemed to get worse and worse. Hence the National Mission of Repentance and Hope and the various ways of Renewal that have followed. Similarly in the fifth century there was a man called Salvian of Marseilles (Mr. Pickman does not like him) who explained to his contemporaries that they were only getting what they deserved. As Salvian was out to prove that justice was being meted out here and now, he had to make men's vices appear to equal their misfortunes, and since there was no getting over the misfortunes, he was obliged to exaggerate the vices. He was particularly severe on the people of Trier, who tried to forget their miseries by going to the Circus. Obviously, the right course would have been to attend church more regularly. All this has rather a familiar ring.

Closely connected with the growing wretchedness of the time was the development of the cult of saints and martyrs and the readiness to believe in miracle workers. Heaven was high, and God seemed far off, and the reward of the righteous was postponed to another world but dimly conceived. Naturally men turned to the local holy man whose goodness might draw down blessings on his fellow-citizens. Eusebius and Augustine had adopted a somewhat critical attitude towards contemporary miracles. But the wish, the eagerness to believe in marvels was too strong to be resisted. Martin of Tours was the pattern saint of the last age of the Roman Empire. In Gaul his fame almost eclipsed that of St. Peter. He seems, indeed, to have been a man of charming personality of the type which after ages called Francisan, an ex-army officer, simple and unsophisticated and of boundless charity. He was on speaking terms with supernatural beings good and evil, and actually tried to convert the Devil, to whom he addressed this touching appeal:

'If thou, unfortunate one, wouldst but cease to pursue mankind, if to-day, now that the judgment day is nigh, thou wouldst repent thee of thy misdeeds, I am so sure of the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ that I would promise thee pardon and peace' (p. 87).

Burns was not so confident.

'O wad ye tak' a thought an' men'!
Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
Still ha'e a stake.'
(Address to the De'il.)

More extraordinary, perhaps, still, St. Martin even protested against the execution of some heretics.

The period under review was the heyday of episcopacy. Men of birth and culture and wealth, debarred from any other useful career in a world where the barbarian was everywhere dominant, gave themselves and incidentally their wealth to the Church. The local Roman magnate, often a layman, sometimes, as in the case of Ambrose, an unbaptized layman, was chosen as Bishop. Often, surprisingly often, the experiment proved a success. But in the long run the disputes, doctrinal and personal, among the bishops necessitated an appeal to a higher authority. General Councils could meet but seldom, and when they did meet they often gave more scandal than satisfaction; they were terrorized by gangsters, as at Ephesus, or manipulated by the Emperor and his favourites. Already the claims of the Roman Bishop to monarchical power were becoming universally admitted at least in theory in the West.

Mr. Pickman's modest claims are more than justified; he has shown that an independent thinker can venture into the theological labyrinth and throw new light on its dark places.

GAMALIEL MILNER.

THE GOSPELS IN THE MAKING*

This book is a clear and candid presentation of the present position of critical Gospel research. In every generation there is need that the theories, and the grounds for those theories, of the expert student should be made available to the inexpert but interested reader. On few subjects is this more necessary than on those books of the New Testament which give to us the substance of our knowledge of the Jesus of history. The gap here existing between the Christian student and the average member of the pew — perhaps also of the pulpit — is very wide. Mr. Richardson's book will help to bridge that gap. As a conspectus of the situation with regard to recent scientific investigation of the Synoptic Gospels it will also be found useful by students and teachers. The author has written about issues which are still *sub judice* in an undogmatic manner, but he has not hesitated to state his own conclusions on disputable matters.

The main concern of the book is with that shadowy and now much discussed oral period which preceded the writing of the Gospels. The importance of this pre-literary age has been much emphasised during the last twenty years or so, and the endeavour made by the method known as 'Form criticism' to cast light upon the development of the Gospel tradition and its crystallisation in our present Synoptic Gospels. After discussing in his first chapter the literary criticism of the Gospels and setting forth in broad outline the results of a century of research, Mr. Richardson

* *The Gospels in the Making: An Introduction to the Recent Criticism of the Synoptic Gospels.* By Alan Richardson. (S.C.M. Press. 5/- net. 1938.)

comes to consider the importance of this oral period; but he rightly points out that

> 'at every step it is essential to work upon the *data* supplied by the methods of literary criticism of our written records, since no other *data* are available.'

During this period the various 'needs' of the early Christian community determine the tradition (this word 'need' is generally employed in 'Form-history' discussions). Mr. Richardson's view is that

> 'a judicious appreciation of the forces which governed the actual shaping of the tradition leads away from, rather than towards, any extreme scepticism concerning the reliability as historical records of the Gospel accounts of the life and sayings of Jesus.'

It is clear that the Evangelists were not scientific historians. Yet to say that they are 'authors of missionary propaganda' might well in these days be misunderstood. Modern makers and users of 'propaganda' are not customarily regarded as lovers of truth.

> 'Like St. Paul, the Gospel-writers are not concerned to know Jesus after the flesh (*II Cor.* v, 16); that is to say, they are frankly not interested in the historical circumstances of Jesus except in so far as these circumstances are relevant to their theological purposes.'

Leaving on one side the disputable question as to what Paul really meant in *II Cor.* v, 16, the positive assertion must be made that the evangelists *were* interested in the main facts of the life and message of Jesus.

In discussing the oldest part of the Gospel tradition Mr. Richardson maintains the conclusion of much modern scholarship that the Passion Story received its final and definite shape before any other parts, and gives the grounds for this conclusion. Coming to 'St. Mark's Outline of the Ministry of Jesus,' the author supports the view of a 'Marcan outline' which is historically reliable, to which the Passion story has been added, giving cogent reasons for rejecting the extreme views of certain of the 'form' critics. Into this 'frame' Mark fitted the *pericopae,* that is, the separate fragments of the tradition.

> 'Mark had a frame, and he had some pictures; he endeavoured to make the pictures fit the frame, not perhaps with complete success, but yet in such a way as to produce an attractive and artistic result. Matthew and Luke have no scruples about rearranging the pictures in the frame, and adding several more; but, at any rate, they use Mark's frame; they have no frame of their own apart from Mark's.'

After a discussion of the 'forms' and of the content of the Gospel stories (where Mr. Richardson seeks to temper belief in the method of 'Form-criticism' with a measure of caution) and of certain salient aspects of the teaching of Jesus, there is a concluding consideration of the main issue left over after Gospel criticism has done its best, or its worst. That question is the relation of Gospel criticism to faith in Jesus Christ. The discussion of this central issue seems to the present reviewer to be of a

slighter character than the critical discussions. Mr. Richardson says: 'When we employ the instrument of historical criticism in our work upon the Gospels, it is historical truth which we criticise, not faith, and still less the Word of God itself.' It is obvious, however, that 'faith in Jesus Christ' cannot adopt a position of splendid isolation from the results of historical inquiry — as, indeed, this whole critical study makes evident. Speaking of 'the tension' which exists between history and faith, Mr. Richardson says:

> 'This tension does not imply that there is an inherent contradiction between historical truth and Christian faith; it merely implies that faith must be based upon history, rather than history upon faith.'

The *content* of 'Christian faith,' however, does depend upon 'historical truth'; and it is because so much 'Christian faith' is based on what has been shown by the scientific study of history as, to say the least, insecure that this tension exists.

In commending this survey of modern critical research the present reviewer may be allowed to add that he has less confidence in the methods of 'Form-criticism' than the author and less assurance that the tension between 'faith' and 'criticism' is to be so easily removed as he seems to suggest. Shades of Barthianism always loom through the darkness when the relation of 'faith' to 'reason' and 'history' is discussed, and the alliance of the first with sheer dogma on the one hand and of historical despair on the other which these shades sometimes commend will not, as I venture to think, prevail in the world of English religious thought. If a subsequent edition of Mr. Richardson's study is called for he would add to its value by a fuller discussion of the issues raised in his last chapter.

Didsbury College. C. J. Wright.

BACK TO AQUINAS AND REASON*

This book consists largely of quotations, and for the most part, very apt and interesting quotations. In fact, it is almost an anthology of the most vivid and stimulating passages of modern philosophical theologians and of philosophers and psychologists in their excursions into the theological field, combined with relevant extracts from the Angelic Doctor. And interlarded among the quotations are clear summaries in the author's own words of the opinions of the said theologians and philosophers and psychologists. The main thesis of the volume is to show how the heresies and extravagances and fantastic speculations of modern writers concerning God find their appropriate corrective in the sober and clear reasoning of the greatest thinker among mediaeval scholastics. It is a great undertaking, carried through with considerable erudition and appreciation of divergent opinions. One feels that the author enjoys the literary excel-

* *God and the Modern Mind.* By Hubert S. Box, B.D., Ph.D. With a Foreword by A. E. Taylor, M.A., D.Litt., Litt.D., F.B.A. (S.P.C.K. 1937. 10/-.)

lencies of many of the writers with whom he is in fiercest disagreement.

The book is worth reading and possessing if only as a compendium of examples of much of the most vital thought of the age in its attempt to conceive of the Supreme Being. William James, Ellis McTaggart, Wildon Carr, Douglas Fawcett, G. H. Howison, Henri Bergson, Samuel Alexander, A. N. Whitehead, J. B. Pratt, Rudolph Otto, A. S. Pringle-Pattison, Emil Brunner, Henry Jones, W. E. Hocking, and many another prominent writer on things pertaining to religion jostle one another in its pages. Space is also found for H. G. Wells with his romantic and challenging descriptions of the Deity, and there are short citations from other literary celebrities. It abounds with eloquent and profoundly moving and illuminating extracts.

In a chapter entitled 'The Modern Conception of God' Dr. Box attempts to tabulate modern ideas on this subject under these headings: (1) a Finite God, (2) a Struggling God, (3) an Evolving God, (4) a Pantheistic God, (5) Polytheism. Henry Jones, Bergson, Alexander, Whitehead, and Douglas Fawcett, all in different ways, are counted as exponents of the evolution of the Deity. Dr. Howison is made out to be a polytheist, though he himself disclaims this. McTaggart and Douglas Fawcett are, perhaps with more justification, similarly classified.

To what is all this welter of heresy attributable? Dr. Box traces it to anti-intellectualism, the mistrust and disparagement of reason, to which Luther gave such violent expression, calling it 'the Devil's greatest whore, . . . a whore eaten by scab and leprosy, who ought to be trodden under foot and destroyed' (p. 120), because of his belief in the utter corruption of human nature. In different ways Hume and Kant and Bergson have contributed to this scepticism of the capacity of the intellect to attain knowledge of the eternal realities. In place of this has come overwhelming emphasis on religious experience, as the chief, if not the only, means by which man may know God. This is largely due to Schleiermacher, who

> 'founded a new era in theology. In the theological realm his influence has been as creative as that of Kant has been in the philosophical' (p. 123).

And from him, though with considerable modifications, Auguste Sabatier and Rudolph Otto derived their presentations of religion. Dr. Box gives considerable space to explication of the last-named's doctrine of the 'numinous.' A typical expression of this kind of approach to belief in God is the famous passage in the *Varieties of Religious Experience* in which William James says that the man who experiences salvation

> 'becomes conscious that this higher part [of himself] is conterminous and continuous with a MORE of the same quality, which is operative in the universe outside of him, and which he can keep in working touch with, and in a fashion get on board of and save himself when all his lower being has gone to pieces in the wreck' (p. 146).

But Dr. Box shows himself a little incredulous of these supposed immediate contacts with Deity, quoting with apparent approval from a diatribe by Emil Brunner against mysticism. He then equates the 'religious experience' of the moderns with the 'natural or innate knowledge' of 'the Fathers' (p. 156) and the 'confused knowledge' of the Schoolmen (p. 157). Dr. Box also betrays an inclination to disparage religious experience, including mysticism, as one-sidedly emotional and lacking in cognition (p. 161). He ignores what William James calls the 'noetic,' or revelatory, quality of mystical states, and the apparent perceptive awareness of Someone, as it were of a great living Spirit in close contact with the soul, which occurs in many conversions and the ensuing religious life. Compared to this, theology gives only theoretical knowledge about God, however valuable it may be in certifying that 'the MORE of the same quality' is indeed, not only operative, but even supreme in, the Universe altogether.

Dr. Box then goes on to discuss the attempts to base theology on the concept of value, of course quoting Höffding, that 'the core of religion . . . consists in the conviction that no value perishes out of the world' (p. 172). He rightly regards this as insufficient. 'It is in the transcendence of the imperfect that communion with God is to be found. . . . Man's ultimate end is not any value, but God' (p. 192). But instead of conceiving God as the supreme value or good, he prefers the more abstract notion of 'being.' And that brings him to the exposition of the Thomist metaphysics in the two concluding chapters.

We find ourselves back amid the scholastic abstractions— essence, existence, potency, act, substance, accident, etc. And by a strictly rational use of these we are told that the existence of God may be proved.

> 'The demonstration of God's existence will therefore in itself surpass all empirical demonstration in point of exactness and certainty' (p. 237).

And to show how this may be Dr. Box gives abundant extracts from St. Thomas. But I confess that after being charmed by the engaging humanity of William James, stirred by the mysterious glamour of Bergson, fascinated by the subtle metaphysics of Whitehead, I found it rather an effort to read what appeared to be the somewhat desiccated Aristotelianism of the *Summa Theologiae* and the *Contra Gentiles*. Of course it would not be fair to judge the Angelic Doctor by a few excerpts made by an admirer for the illustration of his logical method. And it may well be that the present exotic exuberance of much theologising might be healthily pruned by the austerity of scholastic or neo-scholastic discipline. Yet it is strange in a book about God from an alleged Christian standpoint to find no mention of the Catholic doctrine of the Holy Trinity, or the identification by a writer of the New Testament of the essence of God

with love, or Christ's own revelation of the Father in Heaven, whom He bade men imitate so as to be perfect. Perhaps a thoroughgoing application of these concepts of the faith might serve to bring order and illumination into our theological entanglements and obscurities. All the same, Dr. Box has produced a valuable volume.

F. A. M. SPENCER.

A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY MODERNIST*

Most of us first met Lord Herbert of Cherbury as the believer in innate ideas against whom John Locke opened a polemic in his *Essay*. Mr. Carré has done a service to students of English philosophy in making a readable translation of his difficult work with an excellent introduction. Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583—1648) was a courtier, soldier, diplomat, and man of letters, brother of the poet George Herbert, something of whose gifts for poetry and spiritual religion he clearly shared. He was, as Mr. Carré shows, an English writer of the seventeenth century age of transition, when, the authoritative foundations of knowledge having been shaken, the alternative to scepticism was seen to lie in a re-examination of the *criteria* of truth and of the nature of philosophical method. Like his opponent Locke, Herbert saw that the prior question behind the claim to truth of any doctrine was the question of the validity of the processes of thought by which it was reached; as Locke put it,

> 'Before we put ourselves upon enquiries of that nature, it was necessary to examine our own abilities and see what objects our understandings were or were not fitted to deal with';

which is essentially Lord Herbert's contention that every point of dispute ought to be referred to the question what 'faculty' is assumed in proving the point at issue. Lord Herbert finds his criterion in an appeal to 'Common Notions.' Mr. Carré defends him against Locke's uncharitable interpretation, that he means simply the majority opinion of mankind on certain general principles (his noting that the later Greeks had 288 definitions of the *Summum Bonum* should have given him pause in holding too optimistically that the basis of moral truth is common consent). His appeal was not so much to majority opinion as to reason as an inner assent claiming universal validity, and to the conditions which are introspectively discerned to be indispensable in making sense of any experience. In this way he really looks beyond the pure empiricism of Locke to the maturer view of Kant.

To readers of religious philosophy, his main interest lies in his having laid the foundations of Deist Natural Theology. But he was not merely a rationalistic Deist; he did not deny the possibility of revealed religion but argued that, as in all other claims to truth, so in revelation, such even as is claimed in Scripture, the prior question to be considered is the nature and

* *De Veritate.* By Lord Herbert of Cherbury. Translated with an Introduction by Meyrick H. Carré. (University of Bristol Studies. J. W. Arrowsmith, London. 12/6 net.)

conditions of the human minds through which such truth is mediated. His rejection both of Calvinism and of Arminianism accords with the spirit of the Church of the 'middle way'; and in insisting that

> 'all the divine attributes act in harmony so that the light of Grace is reflected in nature just as the light of pity is reflected in justice,'

he was surely not for nothing the brother of George Herbert. So too when he maintained that

> 'if the priests have agreed to emphasize not merely these principles,[1] but have further resolved to add those parts of beliefs in historical events which display great mercy towards the human race, a procedure with which I am in full accord, yet they should not suffer elements to be introduced which disparage the work of Universal Providence or confine it within strict or narrow limits. But neither must they allow features to be introduced which through too hasty a desire for forgiveness, soften or destroy the austere outline of religion; otherwise men may relapse more quickly and with less foresight into sin.'

In passages, such as these, English Modernists will hear a seventeenth century voice speaking in their own accents.

DOROTHY M. EMMET.

KAGAWA'S ILLUSION*

This book is of great value, not because it tells us anything about economics or about theology, but because it tells us about Kagawa, about a man in whose heart the love of God burns with a pure flame, kindling in the soul of many another in East and West alike a pure passion for social righteousness. Kagawa is one of the rare figures of our times in whom men see the love of God in action. This book tells us a good deal about the author; about his conversion, his evangelistic zeal, his work to improve labour and living conditions in Japan, and his perception of the iniquity of the capitalist system. We may criticise Kagawa's political strategy as unrealistic and his economics as a poet's dream in the military dictatorship of modern Japan, yet Kagawa's personal acceptance of the religion of the Cross, his victorious life of self-giving, shames our cynicism and scourges our complacency.

We must distinguish between Kagawa's religion of love and his political strategy of 'brotherhood'; if we are forced to regard the latter as illusion, we are also constrained to recognise the former as reality. And it is the reality which counts, which makes the illusion work, and which makes the dream come true. Illusions are profoundly valuable in social life, and many of the greatest achievements of social service and social progress have been motived by grand illusions; the curse of being able to see through the illusion makes the 'intellectual' a cynic, and hinders him from becoming an agent of social advancement. Kagawa's predecessor in the Rauschenbusch Lectureship Foundation (in which *Brotherhood Economics* was delivered in its earliest form) has profoundly said that the illusion that the collective life of mankind can achieve perfect justice is highly valuable, since 'justice cannot be approximated if the hope of its perfect realisation does not generate a sublime madness in the soul'; 'the truest (social) visions of religion are illusions, which may be partly realised by being resolutely

[1] *i.e.* the Common Notions of Morality and Religion.

* *Brotherhood Economics.* By Toyohiko Kagawa. (S.C.M. Press. 1937. 5/- net.)

believed' (Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, pp. 81 and 277). Reason must criticise illusion before it becomes fanaticism, but the tragic nature of reason's work lies in the fact that so often it destroys the illusion before its work is done. Kagawa tells us about the achievements of the co-operative 'brotherhood' movements in Japan, and as we read about the success of his work we forget for the moment (till we take up our newspapers again) about that other Japan which the Chinese know.

Kagawa's splendid illusion is that the love-commandments of the Sermon on the Mount can be treated as simple, practicable rules in the world of political and economic relationships. The 'brotherhood' (co-operative) movement is the Sermon on the Mount in action.

> 'We aim to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. The co-operative movement is in accord with Christian ideals of love and brotherhood. . . . We must put the spirit of Jesus into industry and commerce' (pp. 128 f.). 'The development of co-operative economics has the power actually to spiritualise once again this machine civilisation' (p. 84).

The argument is one great conditional sentence: *if* all the employers and all the employees of a nation became Kagawas, there would be no need for strikes, bargaining machinery, trades unions, coercive measures, and so on. The frequency of the word 'if' in this kind of writing betrays its foundation in an illusion.

> '*If* producers and consumers came together in a spirit of co-operation, then society has co-ordination' (p. 131). *If* Christians of various denominations would unite among themselves on the principles of co-operation . . . they would be able to prevent unemployment, panic and exploitation' (p. 107). '*If* this guild system could be revived . . . we would not have unemployment' (p. 105). '*If* we to-day could realise in our active life the redemptive love of Christ, we would have a life far excelling that of a communistic Soviet Russia' (pp. 55 f.).

In America, we read, one out of ten is unemployed:

> '*if* the remaining nine of each group would unite to care for their unemployed brother in the spirit of the Cross, could not the problem of unemployment be easily solved?' (p. 47).

As is usual in this school of thought, a simple New Testament picture of the teaching of Jesus is presented, in which Jesus becomes mainly a social reformer with the new love-technique. This leads to some extraordinary interpretations. For example, the meaning of the parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard is that 'the unemployed should not be exploited but should be guaranteed a living wage when they are employed' (p. 39). The significance of the early Christian *Agapé* assumes a curiously modern form: 'because the disciples were suffering from lack of employment, the *Agapé* was planned especially to help unemployed persons' (p. 97). The contribution of the Christian religion to sociological thought lies entirely in the 'communism' of Acts and in Paul's famine-relief work: 'religious communistic life can easily be established, *if* we base it on these principles' (p. 53).

It is a distasteful task to have to criticise a man whose work one admires and whose life fills one with a sense of shame. Especially when one shares a fraction of Kagawa's hatred of the brutalities of the present capitalist order, and especially when one feels that such a review as this will quite possibly prevent from reading the book those who have most need of it,

those who are not alive to the implications of Christian faith for the social order of the capitalist world. Yet it is the reflection that this same 'simple' liberal outlook which Kagawa holds is also held by many in the privileged social groups which drives one to speak the truth as one sees it. It is a saddening thought that this same simple theology which Kagawa upholds as the way out of all our difficulties has been the semi-religious outlook which has commended itself to the socially privileged, just because it is opposed to violence and coercion, and just because, when it is held by those who have not Kagawa's zeal, it becomes an excuse for opposing the attempts of the underprivileged to secure not love but justice by means of fighting for their rights. In the truth which Kagawa's illusion contains he fights for justice and conciliation, but in the falsity of that same illusion many are able to rest content in the substitution of 'charity' for justice and philanthropy for love. Kagawa's illusion is at least a beautiful dream-interlude in Japan's dark night of imperialist-economic aggression.

ALAN RICHARDSON.

THE STRUCTURE OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE*

One of the most important movements in the field of theology is the *empirical* or *experimental* one. It is the data of religious experience which are providing the evidences upon which the new theology is being built, or the older theologies are being reconstructed. Professor Macmurray, in his Terry Lectures at Yale University, has made a challenging and original attempt to define the field of religious experience and the reference of religious ideas. His frankly empirical approach is partial in its treatment, and one's immediate reaction is: 'Tell us more, sir. You have made an excellent beginning. Please give us more details concerning the concept of God which develops from your approach. You cannot stop where you are.'

> 'The hall-mark of empiricism,' Professor Macmurray tells us,
>
> 'is its emphasis upon facts. It insists upon starting from facts and ending in facts; upon tying the inner activities of the mind tightly, at both ends, to the immediate realities of universal human experience. It demands that all theoretical processes should be consciously derived from an objective and unbiased determination of facts, and that at every point their results should be referred to the facts and checked by the facts' (p. ix).

He does not tell us, at this point, what he means by *facts*. But he does tell us that religious and scientific empiricism are not the same thing; and these are not identical with aesthetic empiricism. All three deal with the same facts, but scientific and aesthetic empiricism are partial, both being anti-thetical principles of evaluation; and religious empiricism synthesizes them.

The scientific, aesthetic, and religious attitudes deal with the common experiences of mankind, but *each selects parts of those experiences for*

* *The Structure of Religious Experience.* By John Macmurray. (Yale University Press (Terry Lectures). 77 pp. $1.50.)

special attention. To select is to make an evaluation. Science seeks *utilitarian* values; aesthetics seeks *intrinsic* values. Thus, they seek opposite ends. Religion tends to combine the two. The field of religion includes our evaluation of ourselves and of the world of common experience, which is the rest of us. We value ourselves and them; they value themselves and us. And in this mutual evaluation, persons can be neither merely utilized nor merely objects for intrinsic evaluation. Religion must *include* and *transcend* both attitudes. We must be servants; and we must have intrinsic value; and yet these are anti-thetical, unless we bring in the synthesizing concept of *mutuality*.

> 'If we are to enter into relations with one another, it has to be in terms of an attitude to one another which is able to unite these two attitudes, and so to combine utility value and intrinsic value. This attitude is a religious attitude, and it is best expressed in terms such as fellowship or communion. We have to enter into fellowship with one another and so to create community. . . . The field of religion is the whole field of common experience organized in relation to the central fact of personal relationship. It is the personal data which are central, and form the focus of attention. . . . Religion is about fellowship and community, which are facts of direct, universal human experience' (pp. 22-23).

This is really the core of Professor Macmurray's position. It is a very suggestive treatment of the *human pole* of religious experience.

His second chapter extends this thesis concerning the self and human relations. He deals primarily with the fruitful concept of mutuality (a word which has become very popular in the United States in the writings of Professors Henry Nelson Wieman, Bernard Eugene Meland, and Gregory Vlastos). Professor Macmurray also deals with the rhythm of the religious life as being between *action* and *reflection*. The active life is the *objective process* of human relationships, affections, and mutuality; while the reflective life is that of *subjective activity*. Reflection must be related to objective activity, or it becomes an escape on the wings of illusion.

> 'Religious reflection makes the relationship of persons intentional, and so not merely actual but possible. There are, that is to say, possibilities in it which did not exist before. . . . The immediate effect of the consciousness of community is thus to reveal to reflection the imperfection of the actual community and the possibility of its perfecting' (p. 43).

It is difficult to determine exactly what Macmurray means by *God*. He refers to God as

> 'a universal person to whom the self stands in universal relation. The idea of God as the universal Other is, therefore, inherent in the act of religious reflection' (pp. 51-52).

But Macmurray denies any supernatural concept of God, and his critique is very well presented. One must admit the defects of the type of orthodoxy he attacks. But he does not go on to develop his own concept

of God beyond the quotation above. Macmurray rightly objects to the sentimentality, illusion, and superstition which cling to so much of religion; but *his emphasis on the religious community as the basis for religion seems an unlikely substitute.* He is right in his emphasis that religion will be a potent element in the world community only in so far as it seeks to achieve the ideal of mutuality between persons and groups within the community. He also realizes that a society based upon mutuality is difficult—if not impossible—of attainment. But what and where is God?

He tells us that

> 'God is the primary correlate of human rationality. However, because religious reflection is not primarily expressed in thought but in action, God is not primarily apprehended as an idea, but *in life which is centred in the intention of mutuality, as that infinite personality in which our finite human relationships have their ground and their being*' (p. 52. Italics mine).

God, then, is not merely an aspect of social consciousness (as most of the book seems to imply). God has cosmic implications. Macmurray has not thought this aspect through, but in a previous book he indicates what is implied here.

> 'Only the idea of God is wide enough to represent the synthesis of all things, the restoration of the unity which is broken by the emergence of rational consciousness. . . . Humanism fails because of its restriction' (*Creative Society,* p. 59, paper edition).

But we still cannot be sure what or where God is. We may assume that he is *not* supernatural; but surely he is superhuman and personal. He must be in the world, for

> 'it is *this* world which is the real world; not the world of fact but the world of significance; the world of fact become possibility, become existence with a meaning, a future, and a destiny' (*Structure,* etc., p. 72).

Macmurray's superhuman infinite personality is a valuable concept. But is it anything more than a 'cosmic wastebasket' which is purely a rational necessity? Where is Macmurray's empirical method at this point? Can he show that in the experience of mutuality we find inferences of infinite personality? It seems to this reviewer that Macmurray is guilty of using a rationalism and value-theory which is based upon the philosophy of personalism, without making this presupposition and method evident.

Perhaps a realistic theory of knowledge and a naturalistic metaphysics would make Macmurray's position seem more tenable. Then he would identify his idea of God *not* with some vague personalism but with definite concepts which are consistent with our present view of the cosmos. It seems to the reviewer that on the basis of a pure empiricism extended by rational and analogical inference, Macmurray would have the right to identify God with those processes and patterns of the world (*i.e.* cosmic)

which tend toward good or mutuality, which are capable of reciprocal personal relations with man. Cannot the God which inspires one toward the universal brotherhood be also part of those processes of growth of mutual value, enhancement, and meaning? Does not God pervade (and perhaps transcend in some sense) the realms of men's hearts, human communities, and the processes of the cosmos—without thereby involving a pantheistic concept? And cannot such a God be the *object of direct experience,* and the *sustainer and dynamic of men's courage* in the striving after the beloved community of selves which have both intrinsic and utility value? Cannot such a deity be an intrinsic value and yet a means of achieving human brotherhood and full selfhood for individuals?

It is the opinion of this reviewer that Macmurray's position is that of a profoundly religious man. He is aware of the main issues of religious living, which are the issues of any truly experimental theology. His thought reflects the same interests and attitudes that one finds in the thought of such men as Wieman, Calhoun, Vlastos, and Meland. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that he also reflects the philosophy of personal idealism. Certain of Macmurray's concepts are particularly fruitful, because of the meaning he puts into them, *e.g.* mutuality, intention, reflection, the value of personality, and personal relationships. His book is a significant book, because it is sincere; but it is not only sincere, it is original, penetrating, and profound.

RANDOLPH CRUMP MILLER.

Church Divinity School of the Pacific,
Berkeley, California, U.S.A.

AN OFFICIAL ESTIMATE OF VON HÜGEL*

One has often wondered what his co-religionists thought of Baron von Hügel, and the present volume, which is a translation of a work by a French priest, and carries the *Imprimatur,* tells us. We learn from the Foreword that the Baron was 'from first to last a convinced and devoted Catholic,' although he was 'to some extent involved in the Modernist controversy' (an example, by the way, of the figure known as *meiosis*). His entanglement in this matter is a thing which should be regarded in its right perspective:

> 'Von Hügel is a great personality; and therefore, thank Heaven, these incidents of a distracted period are seen in their proper proportion: insignificant over against his massive and enduring qualities, to which we become ever increasingly alive.'

With regard to his 'warm and ill-fated friendships with Tyrrell and Loisy,' it was *Hard Sayings* (which carried the *Imprimatur*) that attracted him first to Tyrrell. It was the Baron who introduced the young Jesuit to

* *Baron Friedrich von Hügel.* By Maurice Nédoncelle. Translated by Marjorie Vernon. (Longmans. 8/6. 1937.)

the scriptural and theological problems of the day and to such writers as Newman, Blondel, and Loisy. The pupil was apt—too apt, and outstripped his teacher. Father Nédoncelle speaks kindly of Tyrrell (as is now the custom in Catholic circles), and asks:

> 'Why did he deprive Catholicism of his courage and intelligence which, within the pale of orthodoxy, would have been unconquerable, but which, outside it, were only wasted?'

It was indeed a tragedy; but a tragedy not altogether of Tyrrell's own making, perhaps. And it is a pity that the whole story of the relations between the two men will never be known.

> 'We shall never have a complete account of the relations of Tyrrell and von Hügel. It is the secret of the grave, and also of a correspondence which was never published in its entirety and which now never will be, since some of the documents have been withdrawn from the curiosity of the public.'

Father Nédoncelle's summary of the position is as follows:

> 'To sum up, we can say that von Hügel is a Modernist, if by this we mean that he was extremely sensitive to ecclesiastical abuses and to the need for reform; very outspoken, desiring to respect everything which is good in the modern world. He is a Modernist too from the point of view of his faith in science, his suspicion of minds in love with cast-iron systems, his opposition to the individualism of liberal Protestants. He also accepted exegetical hypotheses, which in a less deeply religious man, would infallibly have led to loss of faith. Finally, we cannot deny that the Baron's correspondents included Tyrrell, Loisy, Marcel Hebert and Houtin, and that his allies in the fight were Buonaiuti, Murri, and the editors of *Demain* and *Il Rinnovamento*.'

The points in favour of von Hügel from the ecclesiastical point of view, and which enabled him to be given, so to speak, more rope, were five. (1) He was a layman, and in the *Ecclesia Romana*, as in the *Ecclesia Anglicana*, the orthodoxy of laymen is not so carefully scrutinized. (2) He was a Baron. (3) He was a devout person—and a devout layman is a *rara avis* in any Church. (4) He was an intellectual, of which genus the Roman Church at that time possessed too few (there are plenty of them now that our intellectuals are all in full retreat). (5) His writings were somewhat dull and obscure, so that, as Archbishop Goodier, S.J., has remarked, 'the Baron's mind and teaching are better understood through his interpreters than through an actual study of his writings.' This last point helped a very great deal; had the Baron written like Loisy, or even like Tyrrell, there might have been trouble. As it is, one always suspects that the Baron's obscurity of style may have been due to some extent to obscurity of thought.

Von Hügel's chief contribution to learning was his *The Mystical Element of Religion as Studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and her Friends* (1908). The first part analyses the forces of Western civilization and the elements of religion; the second part deals with the Saint herself—her life, doctrine, surroundings and cultus. This book and Miss Underhill's *Mysticism* between them had an immense influence. M. Nédoncelle gives a very illumin-

ating account of the Baron's theory of the higher reaches of religious experience. Though at the same time he is careful to point out that, unlike some mystics, the Baron did not fall into the errors of Quietism, or into the suspicion of them (perhaps if the late Abbot Chapman had been a layman, the Jesuits would not have troubled to criticize him !)

> 'However great his sympathy with the pioneers of great spiritual adventure, he is yet prudent; analysing with much acumen their dangerous tendencies, their weak points and their defects. In short the Baron holds that the only true mystical life lies within the Church; the Body of Christ. Although he does not deny that great graces have been given to those outside the visible Church, yet he feels that such graces would have developed even more fully and borne more fruit, if cultivated within the fold. A Sadhu Sundar Singh for instance, in spite of the moral beauty of his teaching, still remains poor in religious endowments, and "unperceptive" to divine Reality.'

Those who wish to study von Hügel carefully, and he is well worth such study, could not find a better introduction to his work than M. Nédoncelle's book. Though the writer is a Roman Catholic priest, his attitude throughout is understanding and tolerant, and he is ready to give credit wherever it may seem due. And in any case the judicious reader can make his own allowance for any bias that may exist. J.C.H.

CROCKFORD, 1938*

Once again we welcome *Crockford,* one of the best of monuments to the solid side of the English Church. *Crockford* for 1938 consists of over 2,000 finely printed pages containing reliable information about the organization and the clergy of the Church of England throughout the world brought up to the date of publication. The whole arrangement of the volume is excellent and all information desired is easily and immediately accessible. We have often commended to our readers the good sense and practical shrewdness which characterize the editorial Preface. This year's Preface is no exception. We are glad to observe that the Editor criticizes severely the Church Assembly Measures for dealing with inefficient or negligent clergy. These Measures have since been withdrawn by the Ecclesiastical authorities.

Deeply concerned at the diminishing incomes of the clergy, the Editor is not less concerned with the quality of the ordinand. He cannot understand why so few of the sons of well-to-do parents are to-day seeking Ordination in the English Church. He does not deal with the reasons for this, but they are due, we believe, mainly to economic considerations which bulk large in the materialistic atmosphere of modern life, and to the very real difficulties presented to the modern mind by the Church's dogmatic system.

H.D.A.M.

* *Crockford's Clerical Directory.* (Oxford University Press. 42/- net (63/- India paper). 1938.)

CHURCH DIVINITY SCHOOL OF THE PACIFIC

TOWARDS REUNION*

This is the second edition of essays first published in 1934. Dr. Townley Lord writes on the Baptists, the Dean of Exeter (with a delightful dry humour) on the Church of England, B. L. Manning on Congregationalism, H. G. Wood on the Quakers, A. Victor Murray on Methodism, and W. D. Ninen on Presbyterianism. As Mr. Martin says, to know what the Churches stood for is the first step towards reunion. And these penetrating essays should be of real use in connection with the Edinburgh Conference.

H. P. KINGDON.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

SIR,

In the central Service of the Church, the Holy Eucharist, we desire to dismiss all controversial thoughts and to be united in worship. But there are one or two words which occur in the liturgy which have been coloured by interpretations alien (as most thoughtful Christians realize) to the Mind of Christ and His revelation of the Father. We must claim the right to re-interpret these words. One of these is the word 'satisfaction' in the canon. We should frankly admit that the term was probably understood by those who introduced it into the Consecration prayer as conveying the idea that the justice of God was satisfied by the death of Jesus, because He bore the punishment due to sin *instead* of mankind. The human conscience develops, and with growth comes clearer vision. Nearly a century ago Frederick Robertson pointed out in one of his illuminating sermons that such a doctrine, so far from satisfying Divine justice, is inconsistent with the revelation of God in the Word made flesh for our salvation. It was the perusal of this sermon that liberated my mind from the incubus of this interpretation. Christ revealed the Father as Love, and love can never be satisfied by the infliction of punishment, neither can justice be satisfied by its infliction on a substitute for the offender. When I read this sermon I saw that the New Testament presents God in a very different light. The word 'satisfaction' never occurs in the New Testament in connection with the Cross and Passion of our Lord. There are two passages in the Old Testament in which the translators have used the word 'satisfaction,' and they give us a very different idea. One is in the Psalms, 'when I wake up in Thy likeness I shall be satisfied.' Here we have the thought that the Character of God alone can satisfy the desire of the human soul which aspires to conform to that and to become the image of God.

The other passage is in Isaiah 53, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.' If we apply these prophetic words to Christ we see how aptly they express His satisfaction in the ultimate achievement of His purpose for mankind accomplished by agony, as of a 'woman with child.'

In St. John's First Epistle we are told that God is *faithful* and *just* to forgive the sins of those who confess them. The words imply that *forgive-*

* *Towards Reunion*: *What the Churches stand for.* Edited by Hugh Martin. (S.C.M. Press. 1/6.)

ness is an essential element in the quality of justice. It would not be *righteous* to withhold forgiveness from anyone who truly repents. We know by personal experience that if anyone says, 'I am sorry,' and means it, our part is to blot out the offence — God is said to 'blot out as a thick cloud our transgressions.' Only a resentful soul would fail to recognize this as just as well as generous. 'How much more shall your Heavenly Father.' To think otherwise is a relic of paganism.

The other word that has pagan association is the word propitiation. It is elucidated by the fact that it is cognate with the idea of mercy. In the parable told by our Lord the man who was justified in the sight of God was he who said, 'God be propitiated, *i.e.* merciful to me a sinner.' That alone should suffice to dissipate the notion that our God needs us to offer sacrifice in order to propitiate His wrath; but this is not always recognized. The Mercy-seat in the Jewish tabernacle and Temple was called the Propitiatory, and this connection should be borne in mind when we read St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, chapter III, v. 25, in which he says God hath 'set forth His Son to be a propitiation.' The rendering of this and subsequent verses seems to have been difficult to the translators of the Revised Version. The marginal alterations should be carefully studied. Philo, the Jewish contemporary of St. Paul, described the Mercy-seat which he calls the Propitiatory as 'a symbol of that whereby the Divine Artist compassionates His own work.' Therefore when we hear the words read 'Jesus the Righteous who is the Propitiation for our sins,' we should think of Him as the Mercy-seat, *i.e.* the symbol and expression of the Righteousness and Mercy of God.

The unenlightened races still try to avert evil by sacrifices to the beings they fear, but the Christian offers sacrifice for a very different reason; taught by our Lord he realizes that the principle of self-sacrifice is at the root of creation and of religion. Only by losing our lives can we gain life and impart life — becoming life bearers. St. Paul realized this when he wrote, 'Death worketh in us, but life in you.' The idea of sacrifice is interwoven with every Religion (except Mahommedanism). Often it assumes a debased form and involves the notion of placating a wrathful deity. But that is not always the prevailing idea. Dr. Haug has pointed out that in Hymn 90 (Book 10 of the Rigveda), 'the Creation of the world is represented as the product of the sacrifice of a Perusha or Human Being' (with superhuman faculties) offered by the Gods. The symbolism of the hymn seems to suggest that all manifestations of life, especially human life, spring from a Divine-Human sacrifice. All the universe is pervaded by the same principle — only through self-sacrifice can life be enriched and attain fulfilment both in the lower orders of life and in Humanity. In Jesus Christ we see the principle expressed in its noblest and most perfect aspects. This is the at-onement. The word is not to be found in the New Testament. In the Revised Version it is replaced by the word 'reconciliation' and St. Paul, who uses it, does not apply it to the reconciliation of God to man, but of man to God. *'Be ye reconciled to God,'* he says. That is the only concepton of Reconciliation which is consistent with the parable of the Prodigal Son. The only at-one-ment conceivable, if God is Love, is the response of the human soul to that Love — that is the true 'satisfaction' to the Heart of God, made perfect in the humanity of Jesus, gradually being perfected by His Spirit dwelling in us, conforming us to the predestined image of His beloved Son.

HELEN ALEX: DALLAS.

SIR,

In the Old Testament we are assured in many places that when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness he has God's forgiveness. Some of the prophets teach in explicit terms that sacrifices are not necessary to purchase forgiveness (Micah vi, 5—8). Some of the Psalmists in their more inspired moments teach the same truth; the author of Psalm 50 throws scorn on the idea that God can be propitiated by sacrifices. Jesus taught the same truth of God's free forgiveness to the penitent. This is the national doctrine of Atonement. For sin is in its essence opposition to God's will. But when that opposition ceases there is *ipso facto* at-one-ment, reconciliation, forgiveness.

Why then did Jesus die, if His death was not necessary to secure God's forgiveness? Because His death was necessary for the fulfilment of the purpose for which He had come into the world — *viz.* the redemption of the world from sin. This is clearly seen if we consider what would have happened if He had ascended to heaven from the mount of transfiguration instead of dying on the Cross. Then there would have been no resurrection, consequently no Gospel and no Church; for the death and resurrection of Christ are the foundations of both. Jesus would have been regarded as a teacher who had disappeared when it became too hot for him in his own country. Then Christianity, instead of going forth as the redeeming force in the world, would have died in its infancy.

Moreover, it was necessary not only that Jesus should die, but that He should die on the Cross. Suppose Jesus had died in His bed or as the result of an accident, and then risen the third day. What would have happened? No one would have believed in His death and resurrection. The story would have been discredited as either a pure fake or the result of a swoon having been mistaken for death. It was essential that His death should be a public death — it was of set purpose that this thing was not done in a corner — Christ's death had to be by public execution. In no other way than by His death on the Cross could Jesus fulfil His mission.

Of course the Cross is more than this, more even than God's great appeal of love to man. The Cross does not purchase God's forgiveness, but it does assure us as nothing else can of His forgiveness. For if God so loved us that He gave His Son to suffer thus in order to redeem us from sin and make us forgiveable, who can doubt His more than willingness to forgive those redeemed at such a cost to Himself?

R. A. HITCHCOCK.

Beccles.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH.

SIR,

With reference to Dr. Bradford's letter, does the question of adultery arise when St. Matthew uses the word 'parthenos'? Incidentally, can the seventh commandment, any more than, say, the first, apply to God?

T. E. WARNER.

Dyneley,
St. John's Road,
Driffield.

[We regret that pressure on our space has permitted the publication of only a selection from our letter bag.—ED. *M.C.*]